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The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is a dark, textured material, possibly leather or cloth, in a deep brown or black color. It features a decorative border consisting of a double-line rectangle. In the center of the cover is a smaller rectangular frame, also with a double-line border. Inside this central frame, the title "NOON-DAY MEDITATIONS" is printed in a gold-colored, serif, all-caps font. The title is centered and split into two lines: "NOON-DAY" on the top line and "MEDITATIONS" on the bottom line. There are small horizontal lines above and below the text within the frame. The corners of the cover are decorated with ornate, symmetrical designs that look like stylized flowers or leaves, also in a dark color. The overall appearance is that of an old, elegant book.



4

NOON-DAY MEDITATIONS:

BEING A

REFLECTION UPON A SCRIPTURE TEXT FOR EVERY
DAY IN THE YEAR.

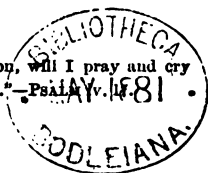
BY THE LATE

ELIZABETH SEARLE.

REPUBLISHED BY HER FRIEND,

M. L. M.

"Evening, and at morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry
aloud, and he shall hear my voice."—Psalm v. 1. 81.



LONDON :

AMES NISBET & CO., BERNERS STREET, W.

AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1880.

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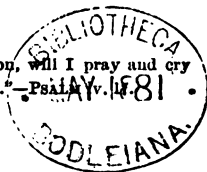
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PREFACE.

To the Church of Christ of "all nations, kindreds, and tongues," is this little work presented, with the most fervent heart-prayer, that the Lord will be pleased to own it as the inditing of his Holy Spirit by giving the sealing testimony of a spiritual blessing on the souls of the readers.

These Meditations were commenced, without the slightest intention of publishing them, at Downend, a retired little hamlet near Bristol, in July, 1838, after reading for a few days Dr. Hawker's "Morning Portions." These were most sweetly applied to the soul, and not having them in possession, the thought occurred of writing a daily portion from texts noted in the preceding year. The Scripture passages were not, therefore, selected for the purpose; they were texts peculiarly applied to the mind in the daily reading of the Holy Scriptures.

The desire is to acknowledge that the work of such an eminent servant of Christ, such a faithful minister of his gospel, has been the model, while it would be considered presumption to pretend to an imitation of the spiritual productions of such an eminent divine and experienced Christian. This little work is but



JANUARY.

JAN. 1.—*For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible; which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.*—DEUT. x. 17.

WE are brought at once into the presence of the great God: begin our reflections, by contemplating the God of gods and Lord of lords; mighty in acts—wondrous in power—eternal in being—unchangeable in purpose—terrible in judgments—firm in execution—whose justice cannot spare the guilty—whose mercy regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward, for all his bounties, his care, his gifts, his blessings, which he bestows on the creatures he has formed: giving them food and raiment, and causing his sun to shine on the just and the unjust.

Oh, my soul, is the Lord *thy* God? Canst thou say *my* Father? Oh, indescribable privilege! Thou art my Lord and my God, and I worship thee—my Father, and I love thee—my Redeemer, and I trust thee—my King, whom I am to obey—my Leader, whom I must follow. Examine thine heart—learn what that obedience is, which is better than sacrifice; and what it is to leave all and follow Christ.

Thou art from everlasting to everlasting, and besides thee there is no other God. Thou art the Great Jehovah, the Creator of all worlds, who “revealest thyself in times past to the fathers by the prophets, but in these last days hast spoken unto us by thy Son, whom thou hast appointed heir of all things, by whom the world was made.”

This is the true God, seen in the face of Jesus

Christ, whom he hath sent—revealed unto us by the Spirit, Three Persons in One, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

JAN. 2.—*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*—2 COR. iv. 17, 18.

Surely there is a voice that speaketh to my soul—a warning voice; let it not pass unheeded; a still small voice; let it sink deep into thine heart. I am led to reflect on things temporal and things eternal. What are things temporal? Affliction is one temporal thing. The apostle says, “Our *light* afflictions, which are but for a moment.” Light, indeed, are all the afflictions of the Christian, who is looking at things eternal; for what is time, compared with eternity? Less than a moment; and light, inconceivably light, are the heaviest afflictions, which are working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Look not, then, my soul, at temporal things; but let the eye of thy mind be fixed on things eternal; so shall thy afflictions, trials, temptations, become blessings. These will wean thee from the fleeting, perishing, deceitful things which are seen; and the eye of faith, looking to that which is not seen; the affections set on that One object above, whom to *know* is life eternal; whom to love with all the heart, with all the soul, and all the mind, is the first command; there will be a peace which passeth understanding flowing into the soul during time, which will be increasing

through eternity, when we shall be immersed in the ocean of eternal love. Oh, my soul, that thine eyes may be kept upon the "Author and Finisher of thy faith," so shalt thou pass through things temporal, and not forget things eternal.

JAN. 3.—*And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee.*—Ps. xxxix. 7.

The answer to the question is very short; but canst thou, my soul, enter into its fulness? Truly, every, man at his best state is altogether vanity—truly, every man walketh in a vain show: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. But what wait I for? *My hope is in thee.* Oh, if this blessed privilege be thine, thou wilt indeed see vanity in all things here below. But what is this hope? Is it a certainty? In whom does it rest? This hope embraces more than can be expressed; but in *one* word it may be simply defined—it is in *thee*. The Psalmist uses a positive assertion—it *is*. Oh, then, my soul, if *thy* hope be indeed in him who alone can deliver thee from all thy transgressions, well may ye rejoice—well may ye wait patiently under every trial, nor envy the empty show and idle vanities of time and sense—willingly leave to the carnal mind, which is fixed on things temporal, to heap up riches, whether of gold or self-righteousness—while the poor in spirit, the despised in this world, the lowly in state, will quietly sit at the feet of Jesus, waiting upon him, resting, trusting, believing, hoping in HIM—that, as he has blotted out thy transgressions, so will he subdue thine iniquities, for his own dear name's sake. Oh, blessed Spirit, help me to pray, to watch, to fight,

resist, to look at the "dear Redeemer, dying Lamb," who alone is our hope through life, in death, and to all eternity. There is no hope but in him.

JAN. 4.—*The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me.*—Ps. cxxxviii. 8.

If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercies; fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded.—PHIL. ii. 1, 2.

Yes, the Lord will carry on the work he has begun; he will perfect his saints, and make them meet for their inheritance, which is secured to them by him, whose mercy endureth for ever; whose love is everlasting, whose word cannot fail; whose work cannot be frustrated. And is this mercy, this love, extended to thee, my soul? Lord, I believe, but leave me not for a moment. If not upheld by *thee*, we fall into divers temptations; if thou do not guide, we go astray; if thou withdraw the light of thy countenance, there is a horror of great darkness. Oh, blessed Lord, thy chastisements are in love; thy corrections for our profit; afflictions in mercy; all to bring forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

I turn from the inspired Psalmist to the inspired Apostle. Where are the disciples of the blessed Jesus? Where the apostolic times? *Is* there any consolation in Christ; any comfort of love; any fellowship of the Spirit; any bowels of mercies, that we be like-minded; having the same love; being of one accord, of one mind? Oh, Lord, thy people are divided, and all appears to be strife or vain-glory. Where, then, is consolation? In Christ. Where *any comfort*? In the love of God. Where any

fellowship? With the Spirit. Here, then, my soul is thy refuge; thy safety, in the bosom of Jesus; thy place, at his feet; thy covering, his righteousness; thy glory, a sinner saved by grace.

JAN. 5.—*And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die because we have seen God.*—JUDG. xiii. 22.

How often is the soul of the believer harrassed with unbelief. I shall yet die, for I have seen God: seen that he is of infinite holiness; that I am vile, and nothing but sin. But oh, how precious is the voice of faith! If the Lord were pleased to slay me, would he have shown me such things? Has he brought me so far, and will he forsake me at last? Would he have heard and answered my prayers? Would he have given me the desire to seek, to love, to follow, to obey him, if he had not intended my final glorification? My soul, look at the faithfulness, the love, the strength, the power of Jesus. He *will* do wondrously, but do thou look on.

JAN. 6.—*O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own.*—1 CHRON. xxix. 16.

O Lord, my God! Yes, it is all thine own. I have nothing to offer but what thou gavest me. I cannot pray, unless thou give the Spirit; though I may utter words with the lips, I cannot obey if thou give not the will. I have no strength, no power, no faith, but what thou bestoweth; I am dead, cold, heartless in the experimental life, if thou do not stir and quicken me. Oh, my Lord, give me abundantly wherewithal to offer unto thee; and then give me the heart, the

soul, the mind, the strength, to give thee all ; to cast off the deeds and works of the flesh, for *thy* sake ; leave all, forsake all, and everything for thee. Oh, Jesus, my Lord and my Redeemer, I am but an unprofitable servant !

JAN. 7.—*And I said, Should such a one as I flee?*
NEH. vi. 11.

Oh, my soul, that thou couldst always enjoy the faith of Nehemiah ! But how many enemies are there continually in the way to put the believer in fear ; make him fly to an earthly sanctuary for refuge ; seek some arm of flesh ; leave his post, that the work of God may be hindered ! But is not every child of God *privileged* to say, “ Shall such a one as I flee ? ” one, whose eyes have been opened to see the great salvation that has been wrought ; a sinner saved by grace ; a rebel pardoned through mercy, by the blood of Christ ; justified by his glorious righteousness ; a member of his body ; an heir of glory ; having fellowship with the Father, Son and Spirit. “ Shall such a one as I flee ? Who is there, that being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life ? I will not go in.” Oh, how favoured is Nehemiah ! And lo ! he perceives that God had not sent Shemaiah : he saw the schemes of the enemies, and he could pray unto his God. The work was completed, for it was wrought of God ; and the enemies perceived it, and were much cast down in their own eyes ; while Nehemiah could rejoice, when he saw the work of God prosper ; he could praise his God, who kept him faithful and persevering.

My soul, art thou alive to thy privileges—steadfast immovable in thy faith ? Ah ! Lord God, the

knowest without thy strength we are perfect weakness ; for the strength thou givest, to thee be all the glory and the praise, O God of our salvation.

JAN. 8.—*But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*—
GAL. vi. 14.

O God, my Father, forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of thy dear Son. What is there for the Christian to glory in beside ? We must reply, there is nothing to glory in out of Christ. Is there anything valuable, abiding, any peace, joy, comfort, satisfaction out of him ? Any strength, power, faith, hope, love, that is not derived from him ? He has done all, gives all, is all in all. What then, is there to glory in ? My soul, canst thou say with the apostle—Dost thou glory in anything save the cross of Christ ? Is the world dead unto thee, and art thou dead unto the world ? We cannot be alive unto the world if we glory in the cross of Christ. *Can* we be alive to the world and to Christ ? Can the world be alive to us if we have put on the Lord Jesus, and are walking in him.

Art thou crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts ; dying daily to the world ? Is thy hope set on him who is the centre of all earthly good, all heavenly felicity ? Dost thou believe that in Jesus thy eternal life is hid ; that he fulfilled the law in thy stead ; shed his blood that thy sins might be blotted out ; that in him thou art complete, art accepted by his Father and *thy* Father, his God and *thy* God ? Canst thou believe *this*, and with the eye of faith see *the great sacrifice the boundless love and glory in anything but the cross of Jesus ?*

Oh, Holy Spirit, help me, by thy power, to die daily to this world—to live to him whom my soul loveth—to exalt him with whom I long to be—in whose likeness I shall awake, after the sleep of death, and see him as he is.

Be with me, I beseech thee, and help me to glorify only in the cross of Christ Jesus, my Lord.

JAN. 9.—*God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you.*—1 SAM. xii. 23.

Where are the faithful servants of the Lord? Where are they who do not cease to pray for the Lord's people? How admonitory is this declaration of the faithful Samuel—the prophet of the Lord: “God forbid that I should *sin* against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way.” You, who have rebelled, sinned against the most high God, do you not doubt need my prayers? do you not require that I should unceasingly pray for you? Moreover, “I will teach you the good and the right way.” “Only”—now, my soul, mark the prophet's words—“only fear the Lord and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.” Holy Spirit, I would by thy help deeply consider these words. It is to thee I must look for instruction. O let my contemplations be for the profit of my soul. Help me to have a continual fear of offending my Lord—a godly jealous fear—that holy fear which is combined with the most devoted love. Oh, if I have this fear, should I ever sin—ever rebel—ever disobey? Alas! “there is a continual law in my member warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin,” so that I cannot

serve thee as I would. But, O Lord, thou knowest that I serve thee in truth, for thou hast given me a new heart, and, by the almighty power of thy Spirit, opened my eyes, to see myself a vile sinner—to *feel* myself worthy only of eternal condemnation; and, by the same power, hast enabled me to cry out, “Who shall deliver me from this body of death,” and to “thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Then, oh, my soul, wilt thou not consider “how *great* things he hath done for thee?” Canst thou believe in this great salvation, and not be humbled to the dust? *feel* thyself a sinner, saved from never-ceasing torments, exalted to never-ending bliss, and not fear, and love, serve, and obey Him who hath done such great things for thee? O God, “I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies.” It is for thy great name’s sake thou hast called a people to show forth thy praise; hast raised monuments of mercy to make known the riches of thy grace; hast prepared living stones, a temple for thy Holy Spirit to dwell in; to build a habitation for thy future glory; to shine forth in the vessels thereunto appointed; and when disencumbered of these vile earthly bodies, they shall, in due time, rise glorious bodies, to Thine everlasting praise—to their everlasting joy. Rejoice, O my soul, and consider “how great things the Lord hath done for thee.”

JAN. 10.—*The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.*—
2 CHRON. xvi. 9.

Why do the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth? What sweet consolation *is there in the answer*, “To show himself strong in

the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him." "Behold, I, even I, saith the Lord, will both search my sheep, and seek them out." There is no place hid from his all-searching eye. Where his sheep are there is he. Yes, and to show himself strong in their behalf, "He will carry the lambs in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young."

But where are they whose heart is perfect before him? for the Scripture declareth, there is none that doeth good—no, not one. Now my soul, look at the great salvation; gaze at Jesus until thou canst lie at his feet in humble adoration, and see no other object—beholding thyself as perfect in him; his life of holiness, his robe of righteousness, his death of suffering and glorious resurrection—all belong to his redeemed; it is all perfect, for nothing but perfection can issue from the great Jehovah, neither is there perfection out of him. Oh, then, my soul, if thy heart of stone has been changed by grace, it is perfect in the sight of God the Father, through the merits of God the Son, by the power of God the Spirit. "Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth, oh, sing praises unto the Lord." "Ascribe ye strength unto God, his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds." Art thou, indeed, impressed with the great things thou art contemplating? Canst thou draw near to the great God as thy Father; see Jesus as thy Redeemer, and say, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee?" Holy Spirit, help me to cry all, all of grace—help me to live to the Lord I love. The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power to his people. Blessed be God.

Blessed for ever be the Great I AM;
Eternal glory to the bleeding Lamb,
Who died to let his captive Bride go free,
Who'll praise her Lord throughout eternity.

JAN. 11.—*Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies, which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things.*—DEUT. xxviii. 48.

Holy Spirit, assist me, I implore thee, from every portion of the word of God, to derive some spiritual benefit for the advancement of the divine life, and the deadening of the flesh to the poor empty things of this sinful world. The text presents a denunciation upon the people of Israel, of which I am led to make a spiritual application for the true Israel, and to consider the woful state of a believer who has backslidden from the Lord, and no longer serving him with joyfulness and gladness of heart for the abundance of all things. Oh, my soul, hadst thou continually in remembrance the great things done for thee; were Jesus ever before thine eyes, would not gladness fill thy heart? But carnal, earthly, unbelieving, we are constantly cast down, though not destroyed. The sad state of a child of God, under the hidings of the Lord's countenance, is brought to my view with feelings of horror; and oh, merciful Father, while I attempt to depict the miserable condition of a renewed soul, to which the text has drawn my mind, let every word be a warning to lead me unceasingly to thy throne of grace, to ask help from thy Spirit to keep me up, keep me near thee, for thy dear Son's sake. "Thou shalt serve thine enemies." The Israelites at one time desired flesh, and it was given to them until it came out of their nostrils; giving way to the lusts of the flesh, it becomes the master, and God gives his children up for a time to the devices of their depraved hearts; *they are left to their will*, and the Lord says, "*Thou shalt serve thine enemies*;" and in what state?

1st.—In hunger. No spiritual food—no feeding on the body of Christ by faith—no application of the word—loathing Divine bread, the heavenly manna, yet not satisfied with the husks of the swine.

2nd.—In thirst. In a dry and thirsty land, where no water is—the barren waste of a divided heart—the soul becomes parched, hardened, dry and unfruitful. For the water of life, the milk of the word, the wine of the gospel, there is no relish ; and the filthy and polluted streams of the world cannot allay the parching thirst of the child of God walking in darkness.

3rd.—In nakedness. Lord, what horror to stand before thee conscious of nakedness—unclothed ! The Saviour's robe, where is it ? Ah ! there is no longer an application, and the soul would fain hide from God's all-searching eye ; shrink from the presence of a loving Father ; in *want* of *all* things, for Jesus is not realized. "A yoke of iron about the neck ; a heavy burden on the back ; the soul mourns, laments, and groans, until the Lord be pleased to restore peace by a renewed application of the blood of the Lamb. O God, in mercy preserve thine Israel, for Christ's sake ; keep them by the power of thy Spirit ; set Jesus ever before them, that they may "serve the Lord our God with joyfulness, and gladness of heart, for the abundance of the great and glorious things thou hast done for them ;" for though nothing can separate the soul from Jesus, that is saved by grace, yet "the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways," and the soul shall find no resting-place, have no peace, until restored to the joys of salvation—is brought back to the Ark of her rest. •

JAN. 12.—*Oh, how I love thy law ; it is my meditation all the day.*—Ps. cxix. 97, and following verses.

Can my soul claim these words as the believer's portion ? Could David be viewing himself when he uttered them ? No ; the inspired King of Israel saw one greater than himself—One who perfectly loved the law, for he “magnified it, and made it honourable”—One whom the law could not condemn, for he fulfilled every jot and tittle, and he must have meditated upon it from everlasting—One who came to do his Father's will, obey his commands ; who increased in stature and wisdom, and was indeed wiser than his enemies—wiser than his most subtle foe, for his wisdom was from above—One whose understanding was infinite, far beyond all his teachers, all the ancients, because he kept the precepts, which none ever did before or after him—One who had no sin of his own ; no evil was found in him, and he kept the word—One who never departed from judgment, for he was fully taught of God, and in him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Sweet indeed must have been the law unto his taste, for it was holy, it was pure, and he was holy, harmless, undefiled ; and how obnoxious must sin have been to him. He who was truth itself must have hated every false way. And have you *no* portion, oh, my soul ? Blessed Jesus ! thy members partake of thy privileges, being in thee, and thou in them ; they have all that thou hast—are all that thou art. Thou hast done all for them, and they must forsake all for thee ; they delight in the law after the inner man, and love its holiness for thy dear sake, and hate sin, because it crucified thee.

When time shall be ended they will begin with thee an *eternal* reign of glory, dwelling for ever in

thy presence. Dost thou *believe* this? O Lord, I see through a glass darkly. Guide me by thy Spirit; keep me as a little child, looking to the Beloved—following my Shepherd—keeping the narrow path—depending wholly on Christ Jesus my Lord for life, light and immortality.

JAN. 13.—*The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.*—2 CHRON. xxx. 18, 19.

The glorious gospel dispensation shines into my soul from this text. The cleansing, according to the purification of the sanctuary, was dispensed with. "The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God," prayed Hezekiah, and "the Lord hearkened to him, and healed the people,"

Blessed Redeemer! Thou hast abolished for ever all the outward washings; thou requirest no self-cleansing, but all who are brought to thee by the Spirit thou healest; it is the preparation of the heart thou lookest at, and a new heart dost thou give to all the Father "has given to thee." He gives the will to come, and not one wilt thou cast out. Pursuing the history of Hezekiah, we find that he "wrought that which was *good and right and truth* before the Lord his God;" and "every work he began in the service of God, in the law, and in the commandments, he did it with *all his heart*." And what was the result? "And *prospered*." Surely my soul may take a lesson here: all that is done for thy Lord, do it with all thy heart, and great will be thy joy to see it prosper. In the 32 chapter, 7th and 8th verses, there are *blessings, comfort, encouragement*, for the believing soul.

Oh, to *believe* these words from the heart! Should we ever be "dismayed," or "afraid," though the powers of earth and hell were let loose? To have the Lord our God to fight our battles! To *believe* this—to trust him—to depend upon him—what comfort would the soul realize! The people rested upon the words of Hezekiah; and canst not thou rest upon the promises of thy God, thy Saviour, thy Redeemer? Oh, look unto him; at what he has already done; has he not pardoned thy numberless sins; and promised to subdue them? (Micah vii. 18, 19). O Lord, crush those enemies; let them not rise up to disturb my peace, which is perfect, when the eye, the heart, the thought are stayed upon thee. But soon the warfare will cease—death will claim this polluted body, and thou, O Lord Jesus, wilt raise it up at the last day—a glorious body in thy likeness—to sin no more, and to be with thee for ever.

JAN. 14.—*For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.*—PROV. v. 21.

My soul, dost thou truly believe that thy ways are before the eyes of the Lord, and that he pondereth *all* thy goings? Alas! an evil heart of unbelief continually forgets this precious truth—for how precious to have the sensible feeling of the watchfulness of thy Lord in times of trial—to know that his eyes are upon thee, when no creature help is nigh—that he who is all compassion, all love, beholdeth thy sorrows, and "pondereth all thy goings." But when the vile corruptions of the flesh prevail, then we cry, "Can God dwell here?" Oh, Jesus, blessed for ever, blessed be thy name! How *can I utter the soul's deep sense of what thou hast effected; and this is it which maketh*

sin so detestable. But let us contrast the state of the wicked, not the sinner, for all are sinners. "The wicked shall be taken in his own iniquities; he shall be holden with the cords of his sins; he shall die without instruction: and in the greatness of his folly shall he go astray."

Oh, Jesus! again my soul looks unto thee. Who are the righteous? These whom *thou* hast justified—whose iniquities *thou* hast borne—who could not be holden with the cords of their sins, for *thou* hast set them free—who could not die without the instruction of thy Holy Spirit—for thou hast pledged thyself thy word—and thou wilt bring them all to glory; they were "as sheep going astray," but by thine Almighty power, thy constraining grace, they return to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. And canst thou claim this blessed privilege? Canst thou, the chief of sinners, look to Jesus as *thy* Shepherd? "Lord, if thou markest iniquities, who can stand?" My ways are before thine eyes; my heart is open to thee; and it is a delight to my soul that *thou* doth "ponder all my goings" in the midst of continual transgression. It is all of grace, and where might I not stray if thine eye were not upon me, restraining, preventing, correcting, upholding, watching. Jesus, my Lord, who never slumbereth nor sleepeth, grant that I may ever feel that my ways are before thee, and thou ponderest all my goings.

JAN. 15.—*If I justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me: if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.*—JOB ix. 20, 21.

Yes! the very thought of justifying ourselves brings condemnation. The bare idea of our being perfect

proves our imperfection, and were it possible for fallen man to be perfect he would not know it—he could not think it—he must despise himself (21st verse). Can created man *know* what perfection is? Perfection! What is it—who can tell—who define it? My soul, what sayest thou? I know *not what* it is—but I know *where* it is. It dwelleth with One—cometh from—centres in—that One only; and here is nothing *but* perfection. The word, the work, the power of Jehovah, Three in One, are perfect; all he says is done; all he does is perfect. And oh, my poor imperfect self, hast thou *no* part in this perfection? Is not thy new-born soul perfect in Jesus? Art thou not covered with his perfect robe?—a partaker of his perfect work? Dost thou not stand before the Father, perfect in the Son? Are not all thy imperfections perfectly blotted out by his precious blood? O Lord, what a train of perfection do I behold! Yet I know not what it is, though I know where it dwelleth. Oh, thou perfect Saviour, accept my imperfect praise. All that cometh from *me*, Lord, is imperfect—all thy Spirit indites is perfect—all that *thou* worketh within me is perfect—all my own is imperfect. Do I glory in my imperfection—yea, that the power of Christ may rest upon me? Do I sin, that grace may abound? Nay, I hate, detest, abhor sin—grieve for it, while I rejoice that all is forgiven—strive against it, and pray for a subdual—desire to be conformed to thy will, thy ways—to be patient and passive, trusting in thee, leaning on thee, guided by thee, living for thee and to thee. And, O blessed Redeemer, dying I shall be with thee, and rising shall be like thee.

JAN. 16.—*For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world.*—1 COR. xi. 31, 32.

Yes, my soul, judge thyself, prove, examine thyself; bring thy actions to the test of God's word; try thyself by that, and what will it prove?—self-condemnation to those who are spiritually alive, having been brought to feel the heart's depravity, and to see the holiness of Christian precept. Judge thyself; thou shalt not be judged! but if the Lord judge thee, thou shalt be chastened, corrected, and why? That thou shouldst not be condemned with the world. "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Their eternal life is safe with him; they cannot be condemned: but whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and all for their profit. He loveth his own, and they are tried and corrected as they need; some for the subdual of inbred corruptions, constitutional sins, or natural tempers; some for wilful transgression, open rebellion against, perverse opposition to, the will of their heavenly Father. But judge not thy brother, believer, for *what* he is corrected; judge thyself, "for happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth; and happy, thrice happy is he whom the Lord condemneth not: yea, everlastingly happy will he be." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? God that justifieth?" Shall *he*, after having justified, accepted the work, the atonement, the righteousness of him who gave himself a ransom for all his people; shall *he* lay anything to their charge? Oh no! his word is sure—the work complete. Who is he that condemneth? Christ that died? Yea, rather that is risen

again, shall he condemn his purchased church? (Acts xx. 28). Will he part with *one* for whom he died and rose again—for whom he is at the right hand of God making intercession? No, no; whom he once loveth, he loveth for ever; those for whom he died cannot be lost; every one of the ransomed flock shall be brought to glory. Oh, my soul, these are great and glorious truths—solemn truths—wonderful truths! Art thou not sunk to the dust? Wilt thou not judge thyself, and bring thy petitions to the Lord? Pray without ceasing—fight without wearying—resist without compromising. Blessed Jesus! without thee, I can do nothing—with thee, all things. Send the help of thy Spirit, that I may wait upon thee, and realize the promise, “Renew my strength daily, mount up with eagles’ wings, run and not be weary, walk and not faint.”

JAN. 17.—*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.*—2 TIM. iii. 12.

Can my soul claim this privilege, of being persecuted for living godly in Christ Jesus? Alas! where are the persecutions in this day?

There is a liberalism pervading the whole community; a leaven which has leavened the whole lump; and Christian charity sweetly assimilates with Infidel liberality, and religion is no longer a disgrace; but still there is a persecution for those who live godly in Christ; who fearlessly contend for the “truth as it is in Jesus;” who assert the sovereignty of God; who allow the Spirit to have free and unrestricted power; who separate themselves from an ungodly world—the nominal Christian, and hypocritical professor. O Lord, did thine own live really godly, they would not

long be free from persecution. But do we not follow our Lord afar off?

Art thou, my soul, ashamed of him "who is the chiefest among ten thousand?" Dost thou deny him who hast died for thee—redeemed thee—saved thee from hell, and raised thee to heaven—borne thy sins and suffered on the cross for them? Oh, wilt thou not forsake all, leave all, bear all, welcome any sufferings for his sake? But see that thou dost really suffer for righteousness' sake. Do not deceive thyself; be assured thy persecutions arise from faithfulness to Jesus; then he will help thee, strengthen, guide, support thee. Yes; live godly in Christ Jesus, thou shalt have thy reward, thou shalt be persecuted here; but hereafter thou shalt be glorified with him.

JAN. 18.—*Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*
—Prov. iii. 5, 6.

An admonition—a warning—a promise. Help me, Holy Spirit, that I may read to understand—meditate to profit. "Trust in the Lord," saith the wise man. Yes, trust in him "with *all* thine heart." "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." And dost thou, my soul, trust with all thine heart? Dost thou not often lean unto thine own understanding? let thy blind reason guide, thy perverse will lead, thy vile affections influence thee? Dost thou not judge unrighteous judgment, go astray, and rebel against thy Lord? And when thou dost so lean, art thou not perplexed, cast down, knowing not whether to turn to the right hand or to the left, bewildered, *unstable*? But look at the promise—believe it—rest

upon it. O Lord! I am powerless, unable to do or believe of myself. Thy Spirit must work all within me; help me to trust—not a half trust—but “with *all* thine heart.” “Acknowledge him in all thy ways, and he shall direct thy paths.” The Lord will be faithful to his promise; do thou be faithful to thy Lord; take heed to the warning, “Ask—seek—knock,” for the Spirit’s help. Look unto Jesus, trust him, confide in him, depend upon him with all thine heart; lean upon “the Beloved,” confess, acknowledge him in all thy ways, and, oh blessed promise, he shall direct thy paths. Oh, that the eye were continually upon him—that the heart never wandered from him: yet *he* abideth faithful—*his* eye never sleepeth—he hath loved with an everlasting love; he watches, warns, corrects, instructs, disciplines, comforts; he will never leave nor forsake his sheep; they shall be brought into the kingdom of grace, and as certainly translated to his kingdom of glory. And is my soul exercised with these glorious truths? I dare not look at self. Saviour! Lord! come to me, for I am a sinful creature. Every moment I need thy presence. Come to me, for I am unclean—come to me, for without thee I am perfect weakness—come to me, for I am not ashamed to stand before thee. I come pleading thine own precious blood-shedding for the remission of all my sins. I come clothed in thine own righteousness, where there can be neither spot nor stain. Come and help me, O Lord, to resist the flesh, my greatest foe, for thine own sake, and to thee shall be all the praise.

Thy ransom’d church can now proclaim
On earth good will and perfect peace.
*Triumphant! Praise thy glorious name,
Where Hallelujahs never cease.*

JAN. 19.—*Then took they up stones to cast at him; but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.*
—JOHN viii. 59.

What vile creatures were those Jews! taking stones to cast at the Messiah they had been so long expecting—this holy Jesus who knew no sin—this Son of God, equal with the Father—this Son of man, who took flesh to save the sinner—one who was their own kindred, to whom he came (John i. 11). But they knew him not! My soul, dost thou not stand self-condemned? Hast thou not cast stones at the holy Jesus? Hast thou not again and again cast stones at his Godhead? Hast thou not rejected him who died for thee—reviled him, of whom thou wert a “member of his body, his flesh and his bones” (Eph. v. 30)—him who had loved thee from everlasting? I have—I have—but, Lord, I knew thee not. “Jesus hid himself,” and the stones touched him not. The stones I cast at *thee*, O Lord, returned upon my own head; they neither injured thee, nor prevented the accomplishment of thy gracious purposes towards a rebellious child. The stones I cast at the Lord, did they not help to break this heart, harder than the flinty rock? Thou didst go through the midst of them, and so passed by—hid thyself for a season, until the appointed time that it pleased thee to show thyself. Thou comest into the world to thine own, but they receive thee not until thou showest thyself openly; until the Spirit open their eyes they know thee not; they, even they, thine own elect, revile, reject, stone, curse thee; but nothing keeps thee from drawing them to thyself; nothing hinders the Spirit’s *work*; *nothing* frustrates the eternal purpose of

Jehovah. Jesus! *could* thy work be frustrated, would there be a soul saved? Are not all the powers of earth and hell combined to hinder it? Is not the flesh all enmity—the devil all malice? Yet, Lord, not one for whom thou hast shed thy blood can Satan ever take from thee! they are marked; he may distress, but he cannot destroy. Thou art invincible, immutable. Thy work is finished—salvation complete. Thou art all power. Thy grace all-sufficient. Thine elect may rebel, they may stone, they may crucify thee, but thy love is unchangeable. “Thou makest them willing in the day of thy power,” and they cry all, all of grace. The love is thine—the work is thine—the grace is thine—and eternal glory is thine. Amen. Hallelujah!

JAN. 20.—*Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.*—PROV. viii. 34.

Blessed, oh how blessed, are they who hear the voice of the Lord! Blessed are they who watch daily at thy gates, watching at the posts of thy doors. Blessed are they who have found that pearl of great price; for whoso heareth the voice of the Son of God, hath everlasting life, and shall be loved of the Father and the Son, who will come and make their abode with them. “In thy favour is life for evermore.”

Where is wisdom? What is it? Who is it? My soul, who is made unto thee righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? The same is wisdom—thy wisdom—all wisdom, set up from everlasting—one with the Father! *In thee, O Jesus, does the fulness of the Godhead dwell, and thou art wisdom.* Hea-

venly privilege, to watch daily at thy gates—to wait at thy doors—to come to thee for daily food, daily help, strength, instruction—waiting thy commands, thy pleasures; waiting for answers to petitions, for commands to act—watching thy word, thy ways. Lord Jesus, what account can my soul render unto thee? Dost thou, my soul, watch and wait, trust, believe, ever at the gates, waiting at thy post? Ah, Lord, there is running from the post, sleeping at the post, not coming to the post, and neither waiting nor watching, but crying out, “All’s well,” and then away. Lord, if thou hadst not found me, never should I have found thee. “Thou hast found them that sought thee not”—those whom thou hast loved with an everlasting love, thou drawest by thy Spirit, and then they follow thee. But they that sin against thee wrong their own soul; all that hate thee love death; all that love thee, hate death, hate sin, hate all that is opposed to thee. Oh my soul, how faithless art thou! often not watching nor waiting. Take heed to thy ways. Thy comfort, thy joys may be lost, though thy mercy be that Jesus abideth faithful. He keeps by the power of his Spirit, his own called ones—keeps them that they shall not perish—gives them strength according to their need.

Holy Spirit, help me to watch and wait at Wisdom’s gates—be at the post daily—to pray without ceasing, wait without wearying, watch without sleeping. Thou must carry on the work thou hast begun. Jesus hath done all for us. Thou must work all in us, and to the eternal Three in One be all the glory and the praise.

JAN. 21.—*Oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*—ROM. xi. 33, and following verses.

My soul, dost thou know anything of the depths of the riches, the wisdom, and knowledge of God? His judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out; yet thou knowest *something* of the riches of his mercy, of his grace, of his love. Who hath known his mind? Who hath been his counsellor? Who hath given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? He looked, and there was no one, so his own arm brought salvation. Who can recompense him? He gives, but what can he receive? He dispenses unsearchable riches; but what can enrich him? He bestows gifts innumerable; but what gift does he need? He filleth those who hunger and thirst after righteousness—he clothes the naked, comforts the poor, the mourner—supplies the wants of the needy—binds up the broken-hearted—raises those that are cast down—and what does he *not* do? For of him, and through him, and to him, are *all* things. He giveth natural gifts to all his creatures—his Providence is over all; but, oh my soul, knowest thou not something of his special gifts, his special providence, his gracious gifts, his faithfulness, his forbearance, his loving-kindness, though his ways are past finding out? Oh, his redeemed are his special care: called by his power, guided by his spirit, to be glorified with himself. O Jesus, the depths of thy wisdom and knowledge! oh the depths of thy mercy and love! oh the depths of the riches of thy grace! Soul, what knowest thou of these depths? Thou knowest they are unfathomable; but thou knowest that he who is all in all—is all thy

hope, thy joy, thy peace—is all thy salvation and all thy desire: whose unsearchable riches are thy treasure—whose unchangeableness is thy rock—whose righteousness is thy clothing—whose command is thy law—whom to love with all thy heart, thy soul, thy mind, is thy chief desire, to whom be glory for ever ! Amen.

JAN. 22.—*Hast thou not known ? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary ? there is no searching of his understanding.*—ISAIAH xl. 28.

The subject of this day appears to be a continuation of the preceding. Can my soul be weary of meditating upon the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth ? He fainteth not, neither is weary ; and the prophet also testifies there is no searching of his understanding. Oh, my soul, dost thou faint ? art thou cast down ? Here is One who can give thee power. Art thou weak, weary, no might ? Behold One who increaseth strength. He will uphold thee—support thee. He is all strength—all power—all might. *Thy* strength, my soul, is perfect weakness ; but when thy strength is all in the Lord—when thou art weak then thou art strong. Be as a little child, he will lead thee—poor in spirit, he will enrich thee—humble in mind, he will exalt thee. Confide in him, he will never deceive thee—trust him, he will supply all thy need—cast thy burden upon him he will sustain thee—ask wisdom, he will give that which thou requirest—ask, *believing*, and thou shalt receive—seek diligently, and thou shalt find—*knock importunately*, and will he not open the abund-

out riches of his grace, conform thee to his will, subdue thy iniquities, and bring thee to submit to his Fatherly chastisements with delight and *thanksgiving*! O blessed Lord, thou mighty Conqueror, thou only God, be all to me, all in me; then shall I neither faint nor be weary.

JAN. 23.—*And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!*—2 SAM. xxiii. 15-17.

Oh, my soul, hast thou not longed for the water of the well of Bethlehem? and hast thou not drunk of those living waters? and art thou not satisfied? Ah no! Again and again I come, that I thirst not; continually longing for larger, longer, more lasting draughts; ever longing, never satisfied, is that soul which loves the Lord in spirit and in truth.

My soul, was it the blood of three mighty men who went in jeopardy for their lives that procured thee this water? Look at thy sins—look at the cross. Jesus will answer thee. Though the king of Israel would not allay his natural thirst with water that had risked the lives of his mighty men, yet David the sinner longed for, and drank of, the living streams of which he, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, sang. His spirit rejected not the blood of Jesus, freely given of God. He saw the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He set the Lord always before him. He looked to Jesus to be cleansed from his iniquities. The Lord was his light and his salvation. His soul panted, yea, thirsted, for the living God. He *felt* himself a sinner; he acknowledged his transgression. He longed for the living waters of Bethlehem. He looked to *his* Lord for pardon; he trusted in *his* righteousness, his

strength, was cleansed by his precious blood, and his mouth showed forth his praise. The inspired Psalmist concludes his divine songs, full of praise, and what can so sweetly, so gloriously, so divinely, so melodiously, so blessedly, sound the praises of the Lord? O Jesus! I would in the inimitable language of Jehovah's appointed King, the Spirit-inspired Prophet, the Beloved's royal ancestor and type. Oh, thou Son of David, yet David's Lord, thou Root and Offspring of the royal line—oh thou Three in One, I would exclaim, "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me! Bless his holy name!" "My soul, praise the Lord! for his own right arm has gotten him the victory." Let thy word, thine acts speak his praise. He has given thee freely of the water of life. Render unto him the honour due unto his name. My heart, my soul, praise, praise the Lord!

JAN. 24.—*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood; and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.*—1 JOHN v. 5, 6.

This Scripture tells thee, my soul, who it is that overcometh the world; but I would enquire *what* is this overcoming the world? Dost thou believe that Jesus is the Son of God? And *how* dost thou believe? Is it not through faith, which is the victory that overcometh the world? And *this* faith can they alone have who are born of God; and this faith overcometh the world. Does it not remove mountains, cast down high imaginations, trust when sight faileth, defend when no arm is nigh, rejoice in tribulation, expect deliverance

when all seems against it, bless and praise the Lord for every trial of it, bear false accusations patiently, receive indignities without feeling them, pity those who oppose themselves, forgive those who offend? Jesus, thou Son of God, show my soul more and more what this overcoming of the world is; enable me to overcome both it, the flesh, and the devil. Help me to see thee more fully in the water of regeneration, in the blood of atonement, by the power of that Spirit, which beareth witness because he is truth—these Three that bear witness on earth—these Three that agree in One—one baptism of the Spirit—one circumcision of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter—one Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing—one Spirit that applieth—one Spirit that witnesseth. So there are Three that bear record in heaven, and these Three are One. Oh, my soul, what a blessed mystery! Look unto Jesus, for in him dwelleth the Godhead. Trust in Jesus, for he is all mighty. Depend upon Jesus for he is all-sufficient. Have faith in Jesus, and thou shalt overcome the world—overcome all things, and finally prevail over all thine enemies within and without.

Thou dost believe that Jesus is the Son of God. The Spirit has convinced thee of sin—of thy total depravity—of righteousness, the only righteousness of Jesus; of judgment, that the Prince of this world is judged and cast out by One stronger than the strong man armed. O Jesus, thou Son of God, help me by thy power to overcome my worldly enemies, my fleshly enemies, my devilish enemies. My soul, look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of thy faith. Put thy trust in him, “for vain is the help of man.” In his strength thou shalt overcome, and he that overcometh shall inherit all things. Even so, Lord Jesus!

JAN. 25.—*If thou hast run with footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do the swelling of Jordan?*—JER. xii. 5.

Oh, my soul, it is the almighty power alone Jehovah that can keep thee up under all trials and difficulties. Hast thou run with the footmen, and have they wearied thee? Then how wilt thou contend with horsemen? In the strength of the Lord. And if in the land of peace thou art wearied, cast down, how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan? Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Trust in the Lord for all things; he can make the waters of Jordan a wall on the right hand and on the left. He can enable thee to run with the chariot. Thou canst do all things through Christ strengthening thee. The winds obey him. He stilleth the raging tempest. He keepeth the waters that they shall not overflow thee. He will support thee in the swelling of Jordan. He will be with thee in the hour of death—at the day of judgment. "Fear not, neither be dismayed, for I am thy God. He will strengthen and uphold thee with the right hand of his righteousness." Lord, it is thou alone that can enable me to contend at all: a breaker would cast my soul down were thou not nigh to keep me up. To thee be all the glory, as to thee belong all the power; to thee be all the praise to all eternity. Be with me in the land of peace, O Lord! Be with me in the seat of war. Let not footmen weary me. Help me to contend with the strong. Be with me that I may feel thy sensible presence that I sink not. With thy blessed help, the swellings of Jordan will be but gentle waves to take my soul to that heavenly Canaan.

where there is no sea, no death, no sin—nothing but thy presence filling all around thee with thine everlasting glory—*perfect* peace—the consummation of every joy, every hope, every desire; the realization of faith, the centre of bliss, the overflowings of love. My soul, dost thou *believe* this? “Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief.”

JAN. 26.—*And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.*—ISAIAH lxxv. 9.

The first promise to thy sinning parent, oh my sin-born soul, was, that her seed should bruise the serpent's head. And now the promised seed is come—come forth out of Jacob—come to destroy the works of the devil—come according to the promise; and out of Judah is come an inheritor of Jehovah's mountains. The elect, the Saviour, the Redeemer, the King, shall inherit it, and his servants shall dwell there. Yes, they shall dwell in thine inheritance, thou elect of God the Father. “They shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid.” Thou seed of Jacob, thou royal descendant from the tribe of Judah, thou hast purchased for thy servants an everlasting inheritance—purchased with thy blood, merited by thine obedience, obtained for all whom the Father gave thee, who shall hear thy voice, the voice of the Beloved, the King. And is Jesus *thy* beloved, oh my soul, thy Shepherd, thy King, thine all? Lord, none but thy servants can dwell in thine inheritance: only those ordained from everlasting to be vessels of mercy, to be called through grace, to be led by thy Spirit, to be kept by *thy* power, to be glorified with thyself, in

thine everlasting kingdom. And they *shall* dwell there, for no power can keep them from it. There is no power greater than thine; and thou has pledged thy word, sacrificed thyself, shed thy blood, given the Comforter, who witnesseth with our spirits that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs of God—joint heirs with thee.

Blessed Jesus, holy Lamb of God, the Purchaser of the inheritance, the Saviour of sinners, the Redeemer of thy people, held my soul by the power of the Spirit to be more alive to these great and wondrous realities, that, rejoicing in hope patient in tribulation, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, I may be looking unto Jesus as the only way to the purchased inheritance, the only way of access to the Father, the only name whereby we can be saved.

Ye servants of your risen Lord,
Unite in heart with one accord
His praises to proclaim:
With holy love and heavenly joy
In union sweet your tongues employ
To bless his glorious name.

JAN. 27.—*Riches and honour are with me, yea, durable riches and righteousness.*—PROV. viii. 18.

And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.—

LUKE xxii. 61.

In contemplating these two portions of Scripture, I am led to behold the glory of Jesus, and the fallibility of poor fallen man. With whom are riches and honour, yea, durable riches and righteousness? Who can claim the possession of durable riches? Who can say, "I am righteous?" O blessed Jesus, *thou* only. Ten thousand thousand tongues cannot proclaim the *unsearchable* riches of Christ; they are unfathomable,

incomprehensible, inexhaustible, everlasting. Thy righteousness, O Lord, can never be understood by mortal man. The holiness, the purity of God is far beyond the comprehension of a human understanding, and this, O Jesus, is thy righteousness ; and this righteousness, these riches, thou bestowest upon all thy people who do, through grace, believe in thee ; and was not Peter one of these ? Did he not believe that thou wert the Christ ? Did he not follow thee ? Did he not say, though *all* should deny thee, yet *he* would not ? Ah, poor mistaken Peter ! thou, as well as many a disciple of thy Lord, wast ignorant of thyself, thy weakness, thy unfaithfulness ; but that look, that eye full of compassion, tenderness, heart-probing inquiry, merciful reproof, patient endurance—that eye turned upon thee, Peter ; the look of thy Lord, lonely, forsaken, persecuted, falsely accused, told thee unspeakable things. Well mightest thou weep tears of bitterness : heart-piercing, heart-rending must have been thy feelings. Dost *thou*, my soul, know anything of such feelings ? Have tears of bitterness ever flowed from agony of soul ? Lord Jesus, Saviour, thou knowest that Peter is not the only one whom thy voice has warned, thy call has summoned, whose heart thy look hast broken. *Thy* look can soften the hardest heart. *Thy* voice can reach those who are most distant from thee. Yea, the dead hear thy voice and live ; and those who *do* live, O Lord, must live daily upon thee, keep close to thee ; and thou must hold them up to keep them from falling into the snares which daily await them.

My soul, be not high-minded, but fear ; be not presuming, but humble ; be not self-confident, for though thou mayest *believe the eye of Jesus* is on thee, yet if he

withhold his supporting presence for a moment, thou mayest be tempted to leave him, to deny him, to curse, and to swear thou knowest him not. But oh how merciful, that the Lord by trifles, even the instinctive voice of a bird, should be pleased to recall the wandering eyes, the wandering feet, the wandering heart, thoughts, affections, to see his look of love, his look of forgiveness, his look of peace. Oh my soul, here is thy treasure, here thy riches—yea, durable riches; thy righteousness—yea, everlasting righteousness; thy strength, thy salvation. Oh, when persecutions arise because of the word, wilt thou deny him, forsake him? Lord, thou must, by thy Spirit, carry on the work thou has begun. As thou hast given faith to believe, so must thou give strength to act. Through thee we can do valiantly, and be more than conquerors, through thee who hast loved thy church with an everlasting love.

JAN. 28.—*But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.*—ROM. vii. 6.

What a glorious deliverance, my soul, for thy contemplation! Delivered from that which condemned thee to eternal death: for thou couldst not fulfil every jot and tittle of a holy law which is the just requirement of a holy God. Delivered from the sting of death, for the strength of sin is the law; and not only delivered, but that being dead wherein we were held, there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. But how, my soul, art thou delivered? Art thou freed? Art thou justified in the sight of him *who saith*, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die"? Oh *my soul*, we are, both Jew and Gentile, bond and

free, male and female, become dead to the law by the body of Christ; for He who knew no sin, was made sin for his sinning people. He fulfilled a holy law for his unholy ones. He made an end of transgression, and brought in an everlasting righteousness for all whom the Father gave him, who are as sheep going astray, but "are washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus by the Spirit of our God, by whose power they return to the Bishop of their souls." Art thou not lost, my soul, in wonder at this great deliverance? And is there then *nothing* required of thee? and canst thou say, "Soul take thine ease?" Oh no! for there is much required of thee. Thou art dead to the law, but alive to Christ, to bring forth fruit unto God. Thou must serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. There is no ease for a heaven-born soul, though a perfect peace for those who are stayed upon the Lord. There is a holy fear of offending; but not the slavish fear of the bondage of sin. Thou must serve him in spirit and in truth; thou must give him thy heart, thy best affections, thy willing services. Mortify the flesh, sow to the Spirit, die to the world, live godly in Christ Jesus, fight the good fight of faith, war with thine enemies with the sword of the Spirit, resist the devil and all his works, looking unto Jesus for strength, believing in him for all things; and, O renewed soul, when thy course is finished, thou shalt receive the crown of glory laid up for all who love the Lord.

Blessed be God, thou art delivered, my soul, from the law of works, and art accepted *in* Jesus, and not for anything thou canst *do*; but thou art under the law of love to Christ, which constrains thee and enables thee to *rejoice in Him*, and

"Crown Him Lord of all."

JAN. 29.—*And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
—2 TIM. iv. 18.

What faith! what confidence! what an expectation! And what an example is the apostle to the living souls in the church of Christ! But can every believer be so certain, and say, "The Lord *shall* deliver me from every evil work, and *will* preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom?" No, all have not the faith of this eminent minister of the gospel—this appointed instrument for a mighty work. But blessed be the name of our Lord! He has secured the promises to all the seed, who *shall* be delivered from every evil work, and *will* be preserved unto the heavenly kingdom of their Lord. It is not *thy faith*, my soul, that delivers thee, *thy confidence* that preserves thee; Jesus has finished the work of redemption; and if the work of grace be begun in thy soul, it will assuredly be carried on; but if thy entrance into the heavenly kingdom depended on thy faith, oh, how uncertain, how insecure would it be! How frequently does faith fail, and unbelief come in like a deluge, sweeping away all the promises, all the comforts of the gospel, and overwhelming the soul in darkness and despair! But Jesus remains the same, there is no change in him, no frustrating his perfect work; but these seasons of unbelief are sore trials, from which the Lord, in his own time, delivers; and the soul, rising again on the wings of faith, beholds the Redeemer, claims him as her deliverer and preserver, and with the apostle can say, "To whom be *glory for ever and ever. Amen.*"

If faith were the key to the mansions above,
 Would any poor mortal be there?
 No. The Father who gave to the Son of his love
 The Church from eternity, nothing can move
 His decree that his throne they shall share.

And faith is the hand for the soul to embrace
 The blessings that Jesus has won :
 He is gone to prepare in the mansions a place
 For his Church, the redeemed of Adam's fall'n race,
 Accepted, complete in the Son.

AN. 30.—*For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.*—Ps. cxix. 89.

Thy last meditation, my soul, is confirmed by the
 ext for this day. For *ever*, O Lord, thy word is *settled*
 a heaven ; and thy word contains glad tidings of
 rest joy. Thy word has been revealed, thy word
 has been proclaimed, thy word has been confirmed.
 How vast, how comprehensive is this *word* ! and in
 all, *all* its numerous significations. For *ever*, O Lord,
 it is settled in heaven, and is it not settled on earth
 also ? The WORD was made flesh and dwelt amongst
 us—came to *finish* the work purposed from eternity—
 to confirm the oath—to reveal himself—to proclaim
 the gospel of peace. Yes, my soul, it is all settled by
 Him who cannot change, who cannot lie, and for ever,
 too, thy state in eternity is fixed ; everlasting happi-
 ness or misery is before thee ; to be for *ever* in his
 presence, or for *ever* cast out. O Lord, where can a
 sinner flee ? where look ? What hope is there for a
 vile, polluted creature to be admitted into the “ ful-
 ness of joy, in thy presence for evermore ? ” Jesus,
thou alone art the hiding place, *thou* only the sinner's
 refuge, *thou* the only way to the Father. Thy work
 has *accomplished* salvation. Thy word is pledged,

and cannot my soul say, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?" And is it not in thine *heart* that thou believest? and is it not with *all* thine heart? Lord, thy eyes are up unto thee; thou must keep thine own; their strength, help, guide, and guardian; lead and defend them; instruct, confirm them in thy word; lead them in the way they should walk; help them to manifest "whose they are, and whom they serve to glorify thee, and live to thy praise.

JAN. 31.—*Rise, and let us be going: behold he is the hand that doth betray me.*—MATT. xxvi. 46.

These few words present such a vast scope for reflection, such a variety of incident to be considered, that the mind is at a loss upon which to rest. But where, my soul, canst thou go with greater profit than Mount Calvary? What can the eye of thy mind contemplate to humble thee more? I would repeat the words of the blessed Redeemer, "Rise, let us be going." Rise out of the dust, rise out of self, rise above the poor earthly things of this world, rise superior to the scoffs, the ridicule, the slander, the persecution of the worldly minded; rise above vain conversation and vainer thoughts; rise above the lust of the eye, the pride of life; rise above the temptations of the flesh, the devices of the devil; rise above sin, and go, my soul, to Calvary! Behold one who betrayed the Lord, and at the foot of the cross look at Jesus, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. Behold the sins which nailed him there. Behold the mercy that has those very sins pardoned. Behold the rebellion of those whom Jesus loved from everlasting. Behold the love which bore all their sins, and blotted out all their transgressions: *not thy* sins only, my soul, but the sins of th

church, *all* the sins of all the members of thy mystic body, O Jesus. Rise then, my soul; how canst thou grovel upon the earthly elements of this polluted earth! and how can pride still hold its seat within thy heart! Dost thou see Jesus, meek and lowly? Dost thou behold his last agony? Dost thou see him crucified for thy sins, and art thou not humbled? Art thou sleeping? Rise, watch and pray. Satan is on the watch. Do not sleep, look unto Jesus; behold, he is at hand that betrayed him. Was it not the devil that entered into Judas? and is he not ever at hand to betray the Lord's people? Oh, my soul, do not sleep. Resist the devil in the strength of thy Lord, thy dying Saviour, thy risen Lord, thy glorified Jesus. He who ever sitteth at the right hand of God, he who will come again in power and great glory, then, oh my soul, *thy* glorified body will rise to meet him, to behold him whom thou lovest. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Yes, rise, my soul, above all earthly things.
 Arise! Behold thy Lord, the King of kings;
 Jesus has risen—has left the gloomy grave,
 Rises triumphant, sinning souls to save.
 Thy sleeping dust shall rise thy Lord to meet,
 Whose word is power, whose work is all complete.
 He'll come again with glory, and will claim
 His ransomed flocks. Hosanna to his name!

FEBRUARY.

FEB. 1.—*And they brought up an evil report of the land they had searched.*—NUM. xxiii. 32.

And who are they who brought an evil report of the land? and what land was it they searched? The people were some of professing Israel, and the land was *Canaan*, that land which was promised to faithful Abra-

ham by the Lord God Almighty himself ; and as his seed according to the flesh inherited this earthly Canaan, so shall all the spiritual seed be blessed with faithful Abraham in possession of the heavenly Canaan, the kingdom of God, into which they are brought, through grace, while on earth, and shall finally inherit the kingdom of glory. And are there not many evil reports brought up of Christ's kingdom ? Many who receive the word with joy, and when persecutions arise, are offended ; and do *they* not give an evil report ? Many who receive the word into a stony heart, so that it cannot take root, and are not their reports evil ? And the wayside hearers, who are swallowed up with the cares, riches, pleasures, pomp and vanity of this world, do they not report evil of the lowly self-denying kingdom of Christ ? And are there not some of the true branches who, on the first view of the land, give an evil report ? Do they not shrink back from enemies without and enemies within ? Do they not say, " We are not able to encounter them, for they are stronger than we ? " but when faith, Caleb like, becomes strong, when they are brought out of self to look at Almighty power, then they can say, " Let us go up and possess it, for we are well able to overcome. " My soul, what sayest thou ? Do not the enemies at times appear giants indeed, and thyself as a grasshopper ? Hast *thou* an evil report to give of the land ? An *evil report* of that land flowing with milk and honey—that land where alone is the bread of life, the heavenly manna—where the living waters flow in never-ceasing streams from the smitten Rock—that land into which thy Joshua has brought thee, sprinkled thy guilty conscience with His blood, and brought peace to thy soul ? *Canst thou bring an evil report of that land, where the*

Captain of thy salvation can make thine enemies as grasshoppers and thyself as a giant? Is he not a Friend who will never leave thee, one who is more to thee than all the world can give? No! "God forbid!" It is a blessed report, a glorious report, a faithful report, a heart-cheering, sin-atoning, soul-saving report; a report, full of love, joy, peace, mercy, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption! Oh, my soul, it is a joyful report, it is glad tidings of great joy to the soul convinced of sin; it is a report of free, unmerited grace to the soul brought out of self; a report of eternal love, of sovereign power, to the soul, looking at Father, Son, and Spirit, as three persons in one Jehovah, working all things according to his everlasting purpose and unchangeable will. Glory and praise for ever and ever. Amen and amen.

FEB. 2.—*Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.*
—PSALM cxliv. 15.

Where is that people, oh my soul, that is in such a case? The Psalmist pronounces them happy. Does he not tell thee who they are? Yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord, and they, and only they, because everlastingly happy; happy in being objects of the Father's love, subjects of the Saviour's kingdom, plants of renown, pillars of the temple, lost sheep found, whom the Lord maketh strong for himself, and from his inexhaustible storehouse supplieth all their need. There is no breaking in, nor going out. Unless the Father draw, ye cannot enter; and whosoever is drawn shall in no wise be cast out. There can be no complaining, all are equally loved; there is no *respecting of persons*, all will be equally happy, placed

at the right hand, in the presence of the Lord
 In time, rich supplies, out of the Lord's garner
 pare them for eternity; all manner of store
 to every state and condition of this people,
 watched and trained, preserved and support
 invisible and almighty power, that with tend
 working all things together for their good.
 dost *thou* know anything of the happiness
 people? I do, I do. A sinner loved by Jesus
 by Jesus, reconciled, justified by Jesus.
 happy—happy in the Lord! A sinner hating
 hungering and thirsting after righteousness, a
 sinner, a repentant sinner, a believing si
 awakened sinner to see the sinfulness of sin
 vinced sinner to depart from the ways of unrighteous
 ness, a rejoicing sinner beholding the righteous
 Jesus, the all-sufficient sacrifice for the sin
 people. Happy the people in such a case—ye
 the people whose God is the Lord!

By grace unbounded, rich and free,
 The people of the Father's choice
 Are chosen, Jesus, all in thee,
 In thee alone can they rejoice.

Happy are they in such a case;
 Happy in God's eternal love;
 Happy with Jesus, face to face,
 To dwell in perfect peace above.

FEB. 3.—*And enter not into judgment with thee
 for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.*
 PSALM cxliii. 2.

How vast, how deep are the things that attend
 salvation! My soul, thou knowest that if
 entered into judgment with *thee*, thou must
 into everlasting woe; for in his sight not

itself, can be justified. But thou must go beyond thyself, beyond the Psalmist, in whose prophetic vision thou must view the Head of the Church in the days of his humiliation, making supplication to the Father, whose will he came to do, and who *could not* enter into judgment with him who was reconciling man unto himself. The Godhead dwelling in thee, O Jesus, kept thy *manhood* from condemnation; for no *man living* shall be justified. Blessed Lord, what a train of wondrous events is presented to the mind! *No man living!* It was thy death, O Jesus, that purchased life for all who died in thee. The great sacrifice prefigured from the beginning was the condition by which man was to be reconciled to God, in whose sight no *man living* can be justified. Oh, my soul, it is the precious death of the Redeemer thou art led to contemplate; and unless thou hast an interest in that death, unless thou died in him, thou canst not be justified in the sight of Jehovah. Yes it is Christ that died, though rather, that is risen again; for had he *not* died, he could not have risen from the dead; and if thou, my soul, hast not virtually died with Christ, thou never hast been, nor never can be, quickened by his Spirit. O Jesus, thou wert fully taught to do thy Father's will, and thy members may offer the same petition, "Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God;" but Jesus only could perfectly perform it. "Thy spirit is good, and unto Jesus it was given without measure; but the flesh is weak and rebellious." Holy Spirit, lead me in the way I should walk. Help me to be faithful to him who died for me. In the contemplation of these glorious truths, is not the soul humbled, while it is exalted? Feeling thy poverty and *sinfulness*, yet beholding thy riches and thy

righteousness treasured up, complete in Christ; thyself nothing—Jesus all. Everlasting praises be unto thee, O Lamb of God, that was slain, and “behold, he is alive for evermore.”

FEB. 4.—*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*
—ECCLESIASTES ix. 10.

What is the fruit of thy meditations, my soul, upon this portion of the sacred volume? It points to where thy earthly tabernacle is hastening—to that end to which all flesh must come—to that time when all things pertaining to this life shall cease for ever—to thy narrow cell, where there is neither work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom. What is the admonition of the preacher? Is it to be diligent in temporal concerns? This seemeth almost needless. I look around and find men working, slaving, and toiling with all their might, powers, energies, thoughts, words, and actions, for the things of this world, as if they had death continually before them and feared that they had scarcely a moment longer to live. I come to my own circumscribed individuality, and there I find a diligence in providing for this perishing body, as if it were to live for ever. If it be hungry or thirsty, cold or weary, it never neglects to seek the remedies, and never forgets that remedies are provided. Garments for covering and comfort are never dispensed with, and the slightest rent made by time or accident, is speedily repaired. Now my soul, what account canst thou give? Dost thou feel so continually thy spiritual wants as the body does its temporal? Art thou so *constantly* hungering and thirsting after spiritual

food? Dost thou so frequently feel thy coldness, thy nakedness, thy languidness, and then seek to find, ask to receive, knock to have the spiritual storehouse opened to thee? Alas, my soul, thou art weighed in the balance of unerring perfection, and art found wanting. There is no rest for the sole of thy foot in thy duties, thy doings, thy thoughts, words, or acts; and thou art driven where a sight of self blessedly leads thee, to him whose glorious work—whose wonderful device—whose infinite knowledge—whose unsearchable wisdom, was perfected in the grave. Yes, it is true what the preacher saith, there is neither work, device, knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest. There is nothing there for thee, my body, but corruption; and thou, my soul, must go to the grave of Jesus; there was laid thine imperishable riches, thine incorruptible treasure, thine everlasting life, thy perfect peace in time, thy fulness of joy in eternity. Here is a grave where corruption could not come, a death which overcame death, and gained the victory by a glorious resurrection—a death that takes the sting of death from thee, my soul, for “I know that my Redeemer liveth; and though worms shall destroy *this body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God.”

FEB. 5.—*Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.*—PSALM CXIX. 80.

Can we take this portion as a prayer suitable for the believer? O Almighty God, how can this corrupt heart be sound in thy sight? How can a sinner stand before thee, and not be ashamed? Thy word, observation, and experience, tell me the heart is desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things. How then can it ever be sound in *thy statutes*, thy perfectly holy law? Ah,
 there must be a new heart given, that thou

mayest see there is no soundness in thee ; then wilt come to him who cleanseth from all sin, and “ My Father, let my heart be sound in thy statutes : there is thy beloved Son who has done all thy will. Let me be cleansed from all iniquity ; for see thou that thou hast made me clean. Let me live in thy love : for here is One who has died to give me life immortally. Let me rise to glory, whither the Forerunner is : thou hast redeemed, entered, even Jesus. And O Father, covered with his righteous robe—thine purity—my soul can come into thy presence, and will not be ashamed. Jesus has made me sound, made me whole, made my scarlet sins white as snow. Jesus said, “ Neither do I condemn thee : go, and sin no more.” Holy Spirit, keep, guard, watch me ; help me to lean upon the Beloved ; keep my eyes upon the everlasting hills, keep my heart with diligence looking unto Jesus, that during time I may not be ashamed to stand before the Lord my God.

FEB. 6.—*And they of Beth-shemesh were reaping wheat harvest in the valley : and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it.*
1 SAMUEL vi. 13.

Can my soul enter into the joy of the men of Beth-shemesh ? The ark of the Lord had long been in the hands of the Philistines, and Israel mourned, for its glory was departed. When the men of Beth-shemesh saw the ark, they rejoiced ; but oh, my soul, thou hast a far greater cause to rejoice than they. The ark could be taken captive, and carried to the hands of the Philistines ; but the living ark is out of the power of the powers of earth, or hell, or death, to take captive. The Philistines may come and take away the visible sanctuary, possess themselves of all earth,

heritance—nay, even the precious written Word ; but thy ark is safe, and thou art safe also in it. Thy body may be destroyed ; but thy soul is safe with Jesus, and nothing can pluck thee out of the ark. The glory may depart, the “pastors may sell the truth,” the disciples deny their Lord, but the church is safe ; the Lord will keep his redeemed to the end. Persecutions may arise, enemies may ravage the land ; but thy ark they cannot touch. No unholy, unsanctified hands can pollute the living sanctuary ; none but the Lord’s own can look with an eye of faith into this Holy of holies. There is no hand, however strong, that can seize this precious ark. No foot, however swift, can gain the prize ; for it is a free gift, not a reward. Surely, then, my soul may rejoice if the eye of faith can see *thy* ark laid up in heaven, and all thou needest securely placed in it. “Rejoice, and again I say rejoice.” Jesus for ever liveth, and where He is, there shall his redeemed be also. The final victory is gained, the last sacrifice is offered, and Jesus is made a “High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec,” by whom all things began, in whom all redemption is completed—through whom all earthly things will end, when time shall be no more.

The eye of faith resting on this never-failing glory, the soul seems to leave this tenement of clay, and almost sigh to think it is still shut up in a polluted body, in which it must continue to grovel upon earth,

Until the blessed summons shall be giv’n
 To change this earth for lasting joys in heav’n,
 A body, free from every taint of sin,
 No more to struggle with a host within.
 So pure, so white, that angels love to gaze,
 And join the chorus of eternal praise,
 With *pardon’d sinners*, who with transport sing,
 “*Redeeming love*” to their Almighty King.

FEB. 7.—*Verily, verily I say unto you, he that hear my words, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.*—JOHN v. 24.

The portion for this day contains some of the glorious words that proceeded out of him who spake never man spake—one who could not lie, who would not deceive. My soul, hast thou heard the voice of the Son of God—hast thou heard his word, and dost thou believe on him that sent him? Then thou hast everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but art passed from death unto life. These are the words of our blessed Lord. Believe in him, and thou hast everlasting life. It is no longer, “*Do this and thou shalt live*,” but, *believe*—“Believe in God; thou believest in Christ; believe in the Father, thou believest in the Son: he that hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father: he that believeth in the Father and the Son, hath the witness of the Spirit that there are Three that bear record in heaven, and these Three are One. Whosoever believeth hath everlasting life. Come, my soul, dost thou indeed believe? Hast thou been raised from death to spiritual life? Has the word of Jesus quickened thee, the power of God working by the Spirit? Then eternal life is certain, for the word of Jesus testify that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. Oh blessed truth, glorious promise, never-failing work, immutable word, sovereign power, that can make the *dead* to *hear* the dead in trespasses and sins, children of wrath even as others! These will be quickened in time, and brought by the same Almighty power through all obstructions, in defiance of all enemies here below, against *all the powers of the Prince of Darkness*, to eternal

glory. Can the soul meditate on these things with indifference? Can it look at the great sacrifice, believe the words of the Lord, and not drop in deep humiliation at his feet? Oh, give him unceasing thanksgiving render unto him his due, give him all the glory, submit thyself unto him: give him, Jesus thy Mediator, thy Reconciler, oh give him continual praise!

FEB. 8.—*For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.*—PSALM xliv. 3.

How sweetly does this day's text assimilate with the past meditation! There was contemplated the wonderful and settled work of Jesus. Here, the church may say with her type, the church in the wilderness, "Thine own sword purchased not this great deliverance, neither did thine own arm save thee." What then was it? O Jehovah! it was thy right hand, thine own arm saved them; and the light of thy countenance was revealed by thy Holy Spirit. And why was this people selected before all the people upon the earth? Because thou hadst a favour unto them. O Lord, if thou hadst not ordained a people to show forth thy praise, never would there have been one to praise thee. Hadst thou not ordained some to everlasting life, all would have rejected thee, and worshipped stocks and stones. Had man been left to his own perverse will and vile inclinations, all would have taken the broad road to destruction—all would have remained willing slaves to Satan, and have been, to all eternity, the subjects of his kingdom; but Christ, the King of glory, *has set up a standard against him, which is an*

invincible standard, an irresistible power, a powerful arm, an all-conquering sword, a glorious light that has arisen upon those who sat in darkness. Christ, the King of glory, has fought the good fight, has gained decisive victory over death, hell, and the grave. He has made "a way for the ransomed to pass over with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads." Christ the King of glory, has opened the gates of righteousness, into which the righteous shall enter. "His own right arm has gotten him the victory." Oh then, ye people, "enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Be thankful unto him, and speak good of his name."

The captives are ransomed, and sinners restored
To honour and glory, with Jesus their Lord ;
And rebels are rescued from sinking to hell ;
In the light of his countenance ever to dwell.

FEB. 9.—*Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well : sing ye unto it.*—NUMBERS xxi. 17.

Journeying through the wilderness, parched with thirst, and continually without those refreshing streams, those cooling waters which give animation and vigour to the weary pilgrims for proceeding on their way : well might Israel sing this song when from time to time the verdant spots were presented to their longing eyes, and water to their parched lips. But Israel drank to thirst again. They digged wells to leave them behind. They thirsted, and reproved their appointed Leader, and rebelled against their God, who, notwithstanding, gave them that which they needed.

What a distinction between the literal and the spiritual Israel ! If the "church in the wilderness" of old could sing and rejoice at the sight of an earthly well.

how much more may the church now cry, "Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it," when she hears her Beloved say, "Whosoever drinketh of *this* water, shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give, shall never thirst; but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life," Sing, oh my soul, sing ye unto it. Spring up, O well, abundantly in my soul for the life that now is. Spring up in a self-denying life for him who hath given everlasting life—spring up in faith, hope, and love—spring up in a dependent, believing life—spring up, O well, and be a continual flowing of living waters. Oh, thou living well, thou only source of living waters, spring up in my soul to thine own glory—spring up, that every idol, every sin, every enemy, may fall prostrate before thee, and all confess that thou only art the Lord. Sing, oh my soul, a new song to Him who alone is worthy; "for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God out of every kindred, and people, and nations, and hast made us kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." Oh, sing ye unto the everlasting well—sing praises unto Jesus in the land of your nativity—sing the song of Zion to Zion's King; for ye are no longer in a strange land, but are fellow-heirs with the Son of God.

FEB. 10.—*And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it up for a reproach upon all Israel.*—1 SAMUEL xi. 2.

The variety of incident with which the word of God abounds, presents to my soul a continual variety for application: and what does this day's portion speak to thee? *It shows the weakness of thy nature, and the*

nature of thine enemies; and in contemplating the result, it proves the effect of faith and the wonderful dealings of God with his people. Hast thou ever proposed making a covenant with thine enemies? "Make a covenant with me, and I will serve thee," says unbelief. Assuredly if this be done, the enemies will say, "If we make a covenant with you, we will thrust out your right eye, and lay it up for a reproach upon all Israel." Beware of the slightest compromise with crafty, designing foes which are encamped against thee; once in their power, under their dominion, they will inevitably thrust out thy *right* eye, and then truth is obscured, error comes in like a flood, and what was to thee bright and lovely, is dimly seen and indifferently viewed; but God, in mercy, will not leave his people who cry unto him. He will send help, and that right early. Wondrous is the faithfulness of the Lord—wonderful the effects of faith which God gives. When thine enemies surround thee, coming up strong and mighty, seek not to make a covenant with them; seek help without delay, seek strength of an all-powerful arm, seek the counsel of the wise, seek the wisdom of the just, seek the help of the mighty; and if thou lean with all thy strength on thy Beloved—if thou fight with the two-edged sword of the Spirit, then thou may with confidence defy the Philistine, and say to Nahash the Ammonite, "To-morrow will I come out to thee." The enemies which encamp around thee are strong, but thou hast a Friend stronger than all the foes of earth and hell—One who is ever more ready to hear than thou to seek. Jesus has ever a heavenly messenger at hand to send thee help. Seek him, trust him, and the enemies shall be slain and scattered, so *that two of them shall not be left together*; for "he

ayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind." ord, keep thy people from the power of thine enemies, that they thrust not out their right eyes, so that the truth is obscured, or compromised, and divers temptations follow.

Thou, O Lord, must put forth thine almighty power, or without thee we can do nothing.

To thee be glory for ever. Amen.

EB. 11.—*Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy; for by faith ye stand.*—2 COR. i. 24.

Our beloved brother, and the apostle of the Gentiles, well knew that "Paul might plant, and Apollos water, but God must give the increase." "Lord it not over God's heritage, he saith, for ye have one Master, even Christ." Paul was a helper of their joy; he comforted the weak, confirmed the strong, reproved the unruly, and was faithful to his Master unto death.

This highly-gifted and favoured apostle was a helper of the joy of his brethren; but confessed he had no dominion over that faith by which they stood. "To your own Master ye must stand or fall." Oh, my soul, in vain you look for a beloved apostle, a helper of the joy of the brethren. Torn asunder, the visible Church in the present day is a broken chain, a divided house; divided in worship—divided in principles—divided in doctrine; and every one saith as of old, "I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas, I of Christ." Is Christ divided, then? Blessed be God, this cannot be: however the members may be divided, Christ remaineth the same—the perfect Head of his divided members—the Fountain which cannot fail—the Rock to stand for ever—a Priest who ever liveth—an all-

sufficient Sacrifice—the living bread to give eternal life—a powerful King of an everlasting kingdom—a faithful Saviour to a faithless people. Yes, my soul, you are kept by the faith of Jesus: accepted through his faith—by his faith you stand—by his faith you live, and his faith will keep you to the end—hold you up in life—hold you on in death; and through his faith shalt thou have an abundant entrance into his glorious kingdom, when faith will give place to that which abideth for ever, even to sight; for thou shalt see him as he is, enjoy his presence, and share his glory for evermore.

FEB. 12.—*If the Son, therefore, shall make you free ye shall be free indeed.*—JOHN viii. 36.

Moses was faithful in all his house, as a servant; he faithfully waited for the law, and received it by the voice of Jehovah in the thunders of Sinai. He faithfully delivered, exacted, and expounded it to the people—faithfully did all the Lord commanded him to do—faithfully shadowed forth, in types and similitudes, according to the Word of God and the pattern given, him who was to come. Moses faithfully performed all things respecting the law, excepting the fulfilment of its moral requirements, by which the people were proved and condemned. They laboured and were heavy laden; yet when that prophet came of whom Moses spake—the substance of the ceremonies, the fulfiller of the moral law—they preferred retaining the yoke sent by the servant, to being made free by the Son. Why, oh my soul, was this? “Why do you not understand my speech (saith the Son), even because ye cannot hear my word?” What a blessed portion have we this day to meditate upon for those

who understand and hear the word of the Son, "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Justified freely; with him freely given all things; free from the condemnation, of the law, which is the strength of sin, and free from sin, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. My soul, if the Son has made thee free, thou art entered into the glorious liberty of the gospel, freed from the slavery of the world—the yoke of Satan, the dominion of the flesh, free to call God thy Father, the Son thy Saviour, the Spirit thy Comforter; free in the Son's easy yoke—free with his light burden, thou shalt find rest unto thy soul; for as Noah's dove could find no rest for the sole of her foot, amidst the turbulent and overwhelming waters of the flood; neither can the soul spiritually convinced of sin, find rest until she is drawn into the "ark of her strength," and made "free from the law of sin and death," by the application of the "blood of the Lamb," who, having blotted out the hand-writing which was against his people, and nailing it to his cross, "has made them free indeed;" so that they are no longer to serve under the servant Moses, but are made fellow-heirs with the Son, Christ Jesus our Lord.

FEB. 13.—*The Lord preserveth all them that love him.*—

PSALM cxlv. 20.

My soul, dost thou love the Lord? A deeper question I would ask thee. Does the Lord know that thou lovest him? Thou mayest deceive thy fellow-man, deceive thyself, but the Searcher of hearts cannot be deceived. If, then, thy heart be right in spirit and in truth before him, this promise is thine, and may the Holy Spirit apply it for thy comfort, and thy

meditation be for thy spiritual profit. Yes, thou mayest rest upon this precious promise, and believe it; but canst thou tell *how*, and from *what* preserved, and *why* the Lord preserveth thee?

Time were too short to "tell the wondrous tale," could thy finite mind, thy confined views, discover the preserving mercies of the Lord, from the time thou didst enter this world of sin to the time when thou shalt quit this body of sin. *How* preserved? One answer only can be given satisfactory and sufficient, "By the power of an Almighty God." From *what* preserved? An impenetrable veil conceals the mighty acts of sovereign power. We know not the wonderful preservations of the Lord every moment of our natural life; but of one act of his sovereign power thou art certain. Thou wert preserved from death until the appointed time to have everlasting life revealed to thee; and from death thou wilt be preserved until the appointed time to depart, and leave thy house of clay. *Why* preserved? Oh, my soul, the veil is in part removed, the mist is rolling away, and a light shineth in upon thee. The word of God revealeth much, though the half be not told. "The Lord preserveth all them that love him;" and these love him because he *first* loved them. They were loved in eternity, therefore are preserved *in Jesus Christ for eternity*—preserved from eternal death—preserved in time unto the end, for life everlasting, because he had a favour unto them—because he "would preserve a people to show forth his praise;" subjects preserved for a kingdom—a betrothed bride preserved for himself—preserved to be presented before him in love, holy and undefiled, without spot or blemish—preserved for his own *name's sake*, according to the good pleasure of *his*

will. Oh, my soul, who can declare the wondrous acts of the Lord—what tongue utter his praise! Preserved, through mercy, by free and sovereign grace! Not because thou art worthy, or holy, or righteous, or good, or without sin *in thyself*. “The Lord alone is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. He is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth—he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him—he also will hear their cries, and will save them—he preserveth all that love him, but the wicked will he destroy.”

Oh, my soul, “shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Bow with submission to his wise decrees; look unto Jesus, *in* whom, *by* whom, *for* whom, thou art preserved; and bless, oh, my soul, the God of all grace. Amen and Amen.

FEB. 14.—*O Lord, thou art my God. I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things: thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.*—ISAIAH xxv. 1.

Happy soul that realizes the power of the prophet's words! Experimentally to feel that thou, O Lord, art my God; unreservedly to exalt *thee*, continually to praise thy name, are some of the privileges of thy people. And is it not, my soul, a delight to exalt thy God above all that heaven or earth contain? Can it, then, bring anything to share the glory due unto him alone? anything in thyself thou wouldst presume to *wish* should bear a part? Nothing, O Lord. Thou alone art to be exalted—thou only to be praised, “For thou hast done wonderful things”—wonderful beyond the capacity of man fully to comprehend, or exalt, or praise, while in this earthen vessel. “Thy counsels of old,” who can understand? The prophet declares they are faithfulness and truth.

The Church has ever, and will ever, acknowledge the same. And cannot thou, my soul, set to thy seal that God, the Lord thy God, is faithful and true? He has spoken that which he would perform; he has performed that which he promised, for he is faithfulness and truth. He has made in "his holy mountain a feast of fat things." He has taken the veil which was spread on the face of all people. He has swallowed up death in victory, and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the earth; "for the Lord hath spoken it, who is faithfulness and truth. This is the day when it can be said, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him: he *hath* saved us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Here are wonderful things for thy contemplation. Oh, exalt the Lord thy God with all thy powers—praise him with all thy heart. He is to be highly exalted—He is to be greatly praised, for he has done wonderful things. He is the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Oh that my soul, like Israel's king,
 Could sound full chords of heav'nly tone!
 Yet, Lord, a broken heart I bring,
 And Jesu's name exalt alone.
 To thee, Redeemer, Saviour, Lord,
 With holy confidence I sing:
 And sound thy praise, believe thy word,
 And hail thee, Zion's glorious King!

FEB. 15.—*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*
 —2 COR. v. 1.

My soul, what a knowledge is this! To know that
thou hast a building of God, eternal in the heavens!

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FEB. 16.—*Glory ye in his holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face evermore.*—PSALM cv. 3, 4.

How beautifully, how gloriously, does the Psalmist strike his harp to give thanks unto the Lord, to call upon his people, to sing psalms unto him, to talk of all his wondrous works!

Are there no people now, oh my soul, to sing unto the Lord? Is there no harp, now David's is silent, to strike the full chords in harmony, to sing the glory of his holy name? Is there no seed of Abraham his servant—no children of Jacob his chosen, "to seek the Lord and his strength, to seek his face evermore?" From everlasting the children of the "chosen One" were ordained a seed, who, through faith should inherit the promises—whose hearts, from generation to generation, have been attuned to love and praise the Lord—who though divided in externals, separated on many points of doctrine, all agree in sounding one full, harmonious chord of "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." Oh, ye seed of Abraham (through faith Luke xix. 9; Gal. iii. 7), ye children of Jacob (Gal. iv. 28; and iii. 28), "make melody in your hearts to the Lord," sound his praises, glory ye in his holy name let your hearts rejoice, ye that seek the Lord; seek his strength, for it is his alone that can keep you up—seek his face evermore, for it is the light of his countenance only that can give solid peace and abiding joy. My soul, is there not one full chord of praise and thanksgiving in thy heart? Yes, Lord, so full that it cannot be expressed—so full that it cannot be sounded. These fragile harps of clay can never "praise thee as they ought"—they cannot praise thee as they would

while here below. To have a full sense of thy redeeming love is more than frail mortality could bear.

We can but look, and wonder, and adore;
 Lost in amazement, that we praise no more.
 Our harps are tun'd, redeeming love to sing,
 But low, and feebly touch, the silver string.
 But when, O Lord, we see thee face to face,
 And view the wonders of thy sovereign grace,
 Our harps thy praise shall sound, our lips shall move
 In one full chord of harmony and love.

FEB. 17.—*And Samuel said, Has the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?*—1 SAM. xv. 22.

Here is a practical portion for thy meditation. Holy Spirit, help my soul to profit, that the flesh may be humbled. Yes, flesh would come with burnt-offerings and sacrifices; but hath the Lord delight in these? Pride, arrogancy, presumption, self-righteousness, high-mindedness, the fear of man, the love of his praise, all come with burnt-offerings and sacrifices. "Hath the Lord as great delight in these, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?" O Lord open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. Thou desirest not sacrifice, thou delightest not in burnt-offerings; but "a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." It is the sacrifices of the heart, a broken spirit, that the Lord accepteth. And what doth he require? "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Can the Lord delight in that which he has commanded to be destroyed? My soul, thy duties, thy good works, thine own righteousness, offered to the Lord for acceptance on his holy altar, are as great an abomination in his sight as thy sins; all must be destroyed—the

fatlings, and all that is good in thine own sight, as well as the vile and refuse, must be swept away, cut down with the edge of the sword, before that great all-sufficient sacrifice which is alone acceptable to God. The broken spirit, the contrite heart, turn continually to God as a sinner, looking unto Jesus only, trusting to him entirely for acceptance; for what hast thou, my soul, to bring? O Lord, a broken heart thou wilt not despise—a heart, broken by thy Spirit, is made willing, and comes to thee in love abhorring the sins, rejecting the duties, when constrained to cast off the robe of self-righteousness “submitting to the righteousness of God in Christ who is the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe.” There is no more sacrifice for sin; but under a law of love to the great High Priest, the soul alive to him, desires to be conformed to his will and to his ways, offers no fleshly sacrifice as meritorious but performs a willing service under this law of love God of my salvation, would that all I do were done to thy glory—that obedience to thy word, and submission to thy will, marked my earthly path! To thank thee, to bless thee, to praise thee, my soul desires, and faithfully, to “run the race set before us looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.”

FEB. 18.—*But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him, for the Lord seeth not a man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.*—1 SAM. xvi. 7

This text appears, my soul, to confirm thy late meditation, and to draw thee out more fully to the

blessed consideration, that "Jehovah seeth not as man seeth." Man judgeth of his fellow-man by his outward appearance, for he cannot look into the heart; but the Lord says, "Look not at his countenance, or the height of his stature." No outward advantages influence an impartial God, who looketh on the heart. It is by this the Lord judgeth. Is thy heart right in his sight? If not, thou art refused. Whatever thy attainments, thy qualities, or goodly appearance, if thy heart remain unchanged, thou wilt be rejected. Many whom the Lord refuseth, man chooseth. "Samuel looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him;" and *many, many* of the Lord's anointed are rejected by man; but, eternal praises be to him, "He knoweth them that are his;" he calleth his sheep by name, and they follow him, and shall never perish. He hath loved them from everlasting. He calleth them in time, and keepeth them to the end; he changeth the heart of stone, and giveth a heart of flesh, searches it, keeps it, watches it, draws it to himself. "The Lord looketh on the heart." The lips may move, and cry, "Lord! Lord!" The feet may run, the fingers work, talents be employed in the Lord's service; there may be a goodly appearance, a high stature in the sight of man; but the Lord seeth not as man seeth. Is the heart the centre of thy actions, the end, for the glory of the Lord? Vain are all thy outward performances if thy heart be not right before him, to whom thy most secret thought, thy most private action, thy every motive, is known.

My soul, canst thou bear the test? If thy heart be right with God, then fear not man; let him reject thee, it matters not, thou art accepted of the Lord. Let him *despise and forsake*, but the Lord loves

thee ; let him persecute and revile, but thou art not forsaken.

If thy heart can stand the scrutiny of the all-piercing eye of Jehovah—if thou hast been brought to see its desperate wickedness, and cast thyself, a needy sinner, upon his bounty—if thou hast fled to the only refuge for law-condemned sinners, and hast found rest for thy soul and peace to thy troubled conscience, oh, give all the praise to Him who is all thy salvation, all thy hope in time, and will be all thy glory in eternity.

FEB. 19.—*David said, Moreover, the Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.*—1 SAMUEL xvii. 37.

The Lord upholds those who trust in him. David, in faith would say, "Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine *shall* be as one of these." David, moreover, knew from whence his help came, *who* had delivered him, and could say, he *will* deliver me from a greater enemy than these. The gigantic Philistine, strong in his own strength, and armed with his own weapons, comes forth to meet one, stronger than the strong man armed, David, in the *name* of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel. The Lord was all to David—a sword, a spear, a shield, and, says David, in faith, "This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand."

How much is there to reflect upon in this firmness of David's faith—his entire confidence in his God!

In this simplicity of faith he went forth with a sling and a stone, singly to encounter this formidable foe, from whom all the men of Israel fled, and were sore afraid.

Look, my soul, at the unarmed Israelite, fearlessly encountering the arrogant, self-relying, God-despising Philistine, armed from head to foot with every human device to shield his gigantic body: but, oh thou defier of the God of the armies of Israel, with all thy human wisdom, thou hadst still left a vulnerable part, uncovered, to which David's God guided the unerring stone. "And, saith David, all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's." So shall all thine enemies, O Lord, perish, so shall all who put their trust in thee prevail. The Israelite may be under the paw of the lion and the bear for a time—the army of Philistines may draw up in battle array against him—the most mighty, the most powerful, may rise up, formidable in stature, encompassed with brass, and defy him, more to be dreaded than a legion. Oh, my soul, the Lord will not forsake his spiritual Israel. Go ye forth to meet thine enemies in the name of the Lord of hosts; put thy whole trust in him, put off Saul's armour, and take, in faith, the sling and stone, "for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." And he shall appear to thy joy, and to thine enemies' everlasting confusion; but do not expect to conquer without facing and resisting them. Turn thy back, and they will follow thee—meet them in thine own strength they will overcome—pause for one moment, they will slay thee. If thou hast a Goliath, which besets thee, face him in the name of the Lord; leaning on thy staff, haste to thy shepherd's scrip, and with one of the smooth stones of the brook, sling in faith in his name, the daring Philistine shall be laid low to the glory of him who fighteth thy battle. He is a shield and buckler to *all who truly trust him*—a sword and a

spear, a breast-plate and helmet, invincible and lasting. O Lord, thou art all! Strength, power, might, belongeth unto thee, and victory, certainly, to all who are on thy side. Oh, trust ye Lord, rejoice in the Lord, and praise him evermore.

FEB. 20.—*Return, ye backsliding children; return, and I will heal your backslidings. Truly in us salvation hoped for from the hills and from multitude of mountains.*—JER. iii. 22, 23.

Return—yes, the Lord most graciously says, “turn, ye backsliding children;” and most mercifully adds, “I will heal your backslidings.” The forbearance of the Lord with his children is wonderful mercy unbounded; but, my soul, presume not to think, if the backsliding children go on frowardly their way, and will not return, that they will be heard. Do not expect joy, and gladness, and peace, if thou art dealing treacherously with thy Lord. Do not expect the light of his countenance if thou art rebel against him; but, return. Will not the weeping supplications of thy children be heard, O Lord God? Behold, we come unto thee. Is this enough? Is it sufficient to acknowledge that thou art the Lord God—that in vain is salvation hoped for from hills or the multitude of mountains? Lord, salvation from everything is in thee. “Truly in the Lord God is the salvation of Israel.” But something more is required of thee, O Israel. “Put away thine iniquities out of my sight,” saith the Lord. “If thou wilt return, return unto me,” was the mercy condition of Israel of old; but put away thine iniquity and give me all thine heart.

The law was imperative, not one requirement of

be dispensed with, so that not one of Adam's fallen race could obtain by it the salvation of the soul. O thou merciful and ever-living Saviour, thou Mediator between God and man, from thee only cometh our help. We may for a time trust to the little mole-hills of our own erecting, and think our mountains stand so strong, that we cannot be moved; but when the Spirit giveth light, we are soon shown that it is to the everlasting hills alone that we can look. There is but one Mountain that can never be moved—no dependence but on the Rock of Ages. Lord, in whom can we trust—on what can we depend—but thyself? No earthly good can give abiding peace—no creature, everlasting happiness. We must turn from the hills and multitude of mountains, and again cry out, "Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." It is all *in the* Lord, treasures to endure for ever, and peace and joy without end or abatement. O my soul, how is it the heart can ever wander from such refreshing springs? Surely we leave but to return, for all out of thee, O Lord, is unsatisfying, deceitful, and treacherous—all in thee, satisfying, real, and abiding.

To turn from thee is leaving substance for shadows, light for darkness—to return to thee, is going from darkness into marvellous light. It is thou, O Lord, that must keep the heart from wandering, the feet from sliding, the eye straight forward, looking unto thee. Oh, put your trust in the Lord; he will be to thee the munition of Rocks, against which nothing can prevail to deprive thee of any good thing it leaseth him to bestow in time. For eternity, all is treasured up *in the* "Lord our God, who alone is the salvation of Israel," *through Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Redeemer.*

FEB. 21.—*But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.*—**MATT. xxiv. 36.**

Do not, my soul, pass hastily over these words: consider well what is that day and hour of which no man knoweth, no, nor the angels, but the Father only. It is the “day of decision,” a day of mercy and justice, of joy and gladness, of weeping and wailing, a day desired, a day dreaded; the fruition of faith, the end of hope, the commencement of unalloyed bliss, and of never-ending woe; a day to see the Lord “face to face,” never again to lose sight of him, or never again to behold him; a day of eternal separation between those on the right hand, and those on the left; a day of praise and wonder, of bitterness and wrath; a day of unmerited reward, of merited retribution; a day of free mercy, of just vengeance; a day of glory and majesty, of darkness and impotence; the display of power, the end of pride; the fulfilment of promises and warnings; a day of delight and terror; a day when no secrets are necessary, no secrets will avail, no secrets will be possible; a day known only to him before whom all must stand and receive their final sentence—him to whom every knee must bow, and every tongue confess that he alone is Lord and God of heaven and earth. My soul, thou art awed by the contemplation, and can only rest on *one* object. Out of Jesus, who can stand before God? If thine eye be not on him, where canst thou look? If thy hope be not in him, what hope hast thou? If thy heart be not with him, how canst thou enjoy his presence? Oh, blessed Lord, thou preparest thy people for the enjoyment thou hast *procured* for them. Grace prepares them for glory,

and glory gives joy unspeakable. Mercy on the right hand, Justice on the left ; " these shall go into everlasting punishment, the righteous into life eternal." All, all of grace, they sing eternal and untiring praises to the Lamb : they cast their crowns before him in wonder, love, and joy. Worship, and honour, and glory to thee, O King of kings and Lord of lords.

FEB. 22.—*Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*—MATT. xxv. 34.

Why wouldst thou reject this portion of Scripture because it leads to the same subject as thy last meditation ? Is it not a most important subject, on which thou mayest meditate another and another day ? Is not my soul sensibly impressed with the thought, the hope, the expectation, that thou art one of those who will be placed at the right hand, to whom the King will say, " Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ? " So impressed, O Lord, that utterance seems to be denied, expressions fail, for language is too confined to convey the feelings of the soul. Blessed of the Father ! A kingdom prepared for thy inheritance ! Come and possess it. No, not a word to express such marvellous acts ; the powers of the mind are lost in wonder and amazement, while looking at self ; but it seems to rise from the dust in contemplating the " King in his beauty," the glory and majesty of the Lord Jesus, whose " name shall be exalted above every name," coming in the clouds of heaven, in power and great glory, sending forth his angels " to gather together his elect." The eye of

faith, delights to feast on him who has purchased this everlasting inheritance for his chosen seed, his perfect body ; self-identity is lost sight of ; for it is on glorious whole, united to a glorious Head, "one with the Father and the Son." Head—members—inheritance—all glorious. Kingdom everlasting, joys eternal. All, all purchased by the life, death, righteousness of him who knew no sin, for those who were all sin. On this great "day" they not only stand the "blessed of the Father," justified in his sight by the merits of the Son, but they are purified from positive guilt with glorified bodies incapable of sinning !

FEB. 23.—*For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!*—ZECH. ix. 17.

The goodness of God is acknowledged by many who know nothing of his beauty. Temporal ease, comforts, luxuries, the ability to live after the course of this world, are ascribed to the goodness of God by many, who know nothing of his gracious acts with their own souls. The bounties of providence are showered down upon man ; the evil and the good, the just and the unjust, share the blessings of light and heat, rain and dew ; riches and poverty are indiscriminate, without respect to persons. The rich man will view his table, laden with a superabundance, and thank God for his goodness. Another will look with sullen discontent at every luxury ; one poor man will thank God for his daily crust, another will murmur with a sufficiency, because he has not more than he wants. With each, destitute of grace, there is no beauty seen, that they should desire him ; but to those who have the power of his grace, and see God in the face of Jesus Christ, as a sin-pardoning God, how great

is his goodness, and how great is his beauty ! He is seen as the only good, and the greatest good upon earth. His bounty is blest in abundance, his goodness is blest in poverty ; in sickness, in health, in trials, in ease, the heart acknowledges " how great is his goodness." There is a beauty to be desired greater than the gold of Ophir, more valued than the richest jewels, more prized than the most precious pearl. And who are they, my soul, that can *feel* " how great is his beauty " ? It is the sensible sinner, to whom he is the altogether lovely, who will sell all that he has to obtain this pearl of great price. Jesus, " how great is thy beauty " to a pardoned sinner ! Too great for thee, my soul, to comprehend, too valuable for thee to estimate. He is the bread of life, the staff of thy existence from the beginning of time to eternity. The wine, the new wine, to be bought without money or price, to cheer the hearts of all who believe in him. What is this world, what would be that which is to come, without thee ? Time is unfruitful, eternity will be hell without thy presence. A pardoned sinner, looking unto thee as *all in all*, now and for ever, can say from the heart, " How great is thy goodness, and how great is thy beauty ! "

FEB. 24.—*Who can understand his errors ? Cleanse thou me from my secret faults.*—PSALM xix. 12.

Who, indeed, can understand his errors ? Not one. Our secret sins are innumerable ; for we know not the extent of sin, neither all that is sin in thy sight. O Lord, " Thou searcher of hearts, hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance : " and, oh, my soul, what hast thou that is *not sin, when brought in the light of Jehovah's*

countenance: we neither know all that is sin, nor anything of its enormity when brought to this pure light. Continually are we committing unknown sins, for which there can be no repentance, neither forsaking. How, then, can we be cleansed? Cleanse *thou* me from secret faults. Jesus, thou has atoned for all sins, sins of ignorance as well as for known sins. The sins which are set in the light of the Lord's countenance are all blotted out by the blood of the Lamb, and, clothed in his garments of salvation, cleansed from all sin, his redeemed are beheld by the Father, complete in his Son. My soul, canst thou contemplate the great things done for sinful man—done for *thee*, and not "abhor thyself in dust and ashes," whilst glorying only in him who *hath* paid the ransom for *all* the sins of his precious jewels? Canst thou think of the sufferings, the humiliation, the death of thy Saviour, and not love him for the great things he has done for thy soul? Oh, blessed Lord, a sinful creature still I am, needing thy salvation every moment. With the Psalmist I exclaim, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me." From love to thee, O Lord, for thy name's sake help me to fight my enemies—the mighty enemies of my soul—the world, the flesh, and the devil; be with me by thy Spirit; help me by thy strength; keep my soul "in the light of thy countenance," that I may flee from sin, and run after thee. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

a. 25.—*I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*—ISA. xliii. 25.

Design could not have allotted a more appropriate ; to succeed the former meditation than this, which presents itself for our contemplation to-day. "I, even I, am he." Yes, the everlasting God of infinite power, who "blotteth out thy transgressions;" actually done, effectively blotted out, by One who is the same for ever! And is there, O Lord, anything in the creature that can cause thee to perform such a marvellous act? My Lord, canst thou claim any merit to cause thy sins to be blotted out? Oh, no! my soul glories in acknowledging and believing that, for thine own sake, thou hast "blotted out my transgressions, and will not remember my sins." Nothing but eternal death is thy just reward: one sin is sufficient to cast thee from the presence of the Lord for ever, and millions of sins can do more. A greater punishment than this there can be; and this is thy portion by nature. Thou hast nothing meritorious to claim: nothing to trust to of thine own. For thy numerous sins, thou canst not receive one compensation; thou canst not atone for, or satisfy the justice of God for one sin. In all our wanderings, we are continually impelled towards one common centre, from which all things diverge—to which all must return. Where is thy rest, O my soul? In thee, O Jesus, who "blotteth out our transgressions for *thine own sake*." This, my soul, is the most precious truth that was ever revealed to, the most precious promise that ever reached the ear of, fallen man. Jesus "came to call the sinner, not the righteous, to repentance," whom he has cleansed with his blood. *He came to seek and to save that which was*

lost; to bind up the broken-hearted, and deliver the captive. Yes, my soul, it is the pardon of thy sins for which thou hast to praise the Lord. Unless pardoned, thou canst not be justified; and unless justified, of what benefit is pardon? For unless restored to God's favour, what comfort is there for the liberated captive? Blessed be God, it is all completed in Christ Jesus our Lord. "Moreover, whom God did predestinate, he also called; whom he justified, them he also glorified. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. viii. 30—33.) "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

FEB. 26.—*O God, thou art my God: early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee; my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.*—PSALM lxxiii. 1.

"A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah." How heavenly are the words of the inspired Psalmist! Read them again and again. Canst thou not in heart join Judah's King, and dwell upon his word with delight? The wilderness of this world is truly a dry and thirsty land; and daily must thou, my soul, seek the Lord thy God. "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." To see his power and and his glory, thou must go to the sanctuary; enter the Holiest of holies, to behold that which is within the veil; and what, O my soul, dost thou behold? Power, glory, might, majesty, and dominion; mercy, truth, peace, love, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; holiness, purity, perfection; a Lamb without blemish or spot; a High Priest, holy, harmless, undefiled, sepa-

rate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; one who, "by his own blood, has obtained eternal redemption, and by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." *How*, my soul, dost thou behold these sacred things? The veil of the Old Testament is done away in Christ. When the heart is turned to the Lord, the veil is taken away, and *then* with boldness we enter into the "Holiest" by the blood of Jesus—by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil—his flesh. O Lord, is not thy loving-kindness better than life; and shall not my lips praise thee? Shall I not bless thee while I live, and lift up my hands in thy name? Can I say with Israel's king, "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches?" Because thou hast been my help—help, O Lord Jesus, in time of need, the greatest need—under a sense of sin, which nothing but thy blood could wash away—a Friend when no creature help could aught avail—therefore, Lord, my God, my Saviour, Redemer, "in the shadow of *thy* wings will I rejoice."

EB. 27.—*But they had heard only that he which persecuted us in times past, now preached the faith which he once destroyed. And they glorified God in me.*—GAL. i. 23, 24.

Is it possible for man himself to turn the torrent of his misguided will? Can he prescribe bounds to his actions, or limit the extent of his doings? Did the persecuting Saul of Tarsus stop, by his own will, from his madness against the faith of Jesus? The words of the apostle Paul will decide the question; himself testify-

ing of the mighty power of God—the sovereign will—the wonders of his grace. Oh, my soul, contemplate this marvellous character, and “glorify in him.” “Persecuting the Christians unto binding and delivering into prison both men and women.” Then behold him preaching the faith he once destroyed. See him enduring all this for his sake, whom he once reviled and rejected; a mighty God, who alone can work on man’s obduracy. In one moment he is turned from his purpose; then, he is humbled to the dust; in the next he confesses him whom he is persecuting to be his Lord; then he preaches Christ crucified, serves his divine Master with a zeal unequalled, and is exalted above men with revelations. What a highly-favoured disciple! O Lord, it lifts the soul up to meditate on thy glorious acts; and we are constrained to glorify thee in the eminent preacher of thy gospel—this apostle who laboured more than all. But, though his gift is greater, thy grace, O Lord, is sufficient for all people; thy sovereign power must act upon all; thy free grace bestowed upon all; thy everlasting kingdom given to all; thy kingdom prepared for all. Thou hast worked for all, died for all, risen for all, and glorified all. The beloved apostle says, the crown of righteousness which the Lord shall give him in that day, shall also be given to all them who love appearing. O Lord, many are there who have persecuted thee in their day of darkness, rejected thee, condemned thee, whose eyes have been opened to thy glory, to confess thy name before men, and to praise the wonders of thy grace.

FEB. 28.—*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*—GAL. ii. 16.

In our last portion, we meditated upon that great apostle who, by the Almighty power, and through the sovereign grace of God, was brought to preach that faith he once laboured to destroy; and now, my soul, thou art led to contemplate what that faith was which he preached. Dost thou believe that he was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and that he brought forth the words of soberness and truth? See, then, what he saith—that man is not justified by the works of the law; for by it shall no flesh be justified. The Jew, judged by the law, must be condemned; the Gentile sinning, without law, must perish; for all stand guilty before God. How, then, oh my soul, can a creature full of sin face a just God, who by no means spares the guilty? The inspired apostle tells thee, “By the faith of Jesus Christ—not by *thy* faith, but by believing in Christ—thou art justified by *his* faith.” Thou must not rest upon thy faith any more than thy works; the one imperfect, the other prone to fail. What a glorious testimony does the apostle bear to this blessed truth:—“The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” And truly, my soul, if thou seekest to be justified by the works of the law, thou dost frustrate the grace of

God, and Christ has lived, suffered, and died in vain. But the apostle says (and who dare deny the authority by which he spake?) "For by grace are ye saved, *through* faith (the faith of Christ), and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." And this gifted apostle adds, "We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them;" and again, "My brethren, ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Oh, my soul, happy art thou if a better righteousness than thine own has been revealed unto thee, whereby thou standest justified in the sight of God the Father. No! God be praised, thou dost not frustrate the grace of God. The everlasting righteousness of the Redeemer is thy pure, thy spotless robe, in which thou art enveloped, to appear before a holy God Justified by the faith of Jesus Christ, "sanctified by faith that is in Christ" (Acts xxvi. 18; Heb. x. 10), accepted complete in him, what, my soul, hast thou to glory in? Nothing but Christ Jesus thy Lord, in whom thou must glory to all eternity. Oh, glory that thou art not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

MARCH.

MARCH 1.—*This only would I learn of you. Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*—GAL. iii. 2.

It appears, my soul, thou art still to meditate upon "law" and "faith." May the Spirit guide thee to

thereby, that thou be not carried away by
o that which profiteth not. "Received ye the
by the works of the law, or by the hearing of
" "Are ye so foolish, the apostle continues,
ng begun in the Spirit, are ye now made
t by the flesh?" No! ye received the Spirit
; hearing of faith, and that instructs thee to
e thou art not made perfect by the flesh. Ye
vers) are all the children of God by faith in
t Jesus. "There is neither Jew nor Greek,
nor free, male nor female; for ye are all one in
; Jesus." The Scripture hath concluded all
sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ
; be given to them that believe; for if there
een a law given which could have given life,
righteousness should have been by the law
21, 22). The gospel was preached to Abraham
; the law was given, which was added because
maggression; and the Jew was kept under the
ill Christ came, but the Gentile was to be
ed through faith, though never under the Jewish
Rom. iii. 27—30.) They that have sinned with-
aw, shall perish without law; they that have
d in the law, shall be judged by the law (Rom.
) All must stand guilty before God. So,
they which be of faith are blessed with faithful
ham, and to be fellow-heirs according to the
ise; and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's
Oh, my soul, what a blessing it is to live by faith,
freed from the law of works, and to be looking
Christ for all things. Freed from the law of
; for justification, and under a law to Christ, in
; we stand justified before God; under the law of
and love, *which worketh obedience*; dead to the

law by the body of Christ ; united to him, to forth fruit unto God (Rom. vii. 4) ; to serve newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the Oh, precious Redeemer, looking unto thee for light, and immortality—thy wisdom to direct strength to perform ! Under a law of love to thee through thee only, we serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, though with perfect which renounces everything but thyself for alliance with God ; and, living or dying, we are t

MARCH. 2.—*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of shout, O daughter of Jerusalem ; behold thou cometh unto thee ; he is just, and having said lowly, and riding upon an ass.*—ZECH. ix. 9.

“ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion : shout daughter of Jerusalem,” is the joyful language inspired prophet. “ Rejoice alway, and again rejoice,” is the response of our beloved apostle whose inspired words we have been thrice led to reflect. And in *what* is it, my soul, thou art called to rejoice ? “ Behold,” says the prophet, “ thou cometh : ” the apostle, “ Rejoice in the Lord.” This privilege vouchsafed in these latter days, to the Christian Church, to see both the prophecy and the fulfilment. The literal Israel were eagerly expecting a temporal king. Spiritual Israel now beheld the ritual King ; one whose kingdom was not of this world. Jesus, though born King of the Jews, according to the descent from David, yet he would not be made king (John vi. 15). There was a work for him to do beyond that of being the ruler of a nation. He did not, then, to reign on earth over his brethren after the flesh ; but he came just, and having salvation—

eek—humble. Yes; humbled himself to die upon
 cross, that he might reign in the hearts of his
 le, scattered among all nations, kindreds, and
 ues. Look, my soul—pause, and wonder at the
 fulfilment of this prophecy. “Hosanna to the
 of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name
 e Lord.” See Jesus, Lord of all things in heaven
 earth, entering the city of David; and how? No
 pomp—no earthly splendour, gaudy trappings
 incely pageantry, marked his entry. The multi-
 spread their garments, and strewed branches be-
 him, and shouted, “Hosanna in the highest;”
 ad they held their peace, the stones would have
 ed to the great event. But Jesus came not to
 alem to be made a king; but in mockery, he was
 d arrayed in a kingly robe, and crowned; the
 nias bowed the knee, and hailed him in derision,
 King of the Jews;” scourged—spit upon—
 —buffeted! What a scene, my soul, for thy
 mpletion! And does the prophet call upon thee,
 ghter of Zion, to “rejoice greatly?” Not rejoice
 sufferings, O Jesus, but in the effects, which
 e a subject of rejoicing through eternity. Thou
 ome, laden with salvation, with holiness, with
 ousness; and oh, my soul, laden with sins, but
 ine own. The sins of all thy purchased ones
 aid upon thee, and for these thou didst suffer
 i. ii. 24); and what has thou bestowed upon
 ? That of which they had none of their own—
 ghteousness. “He was made sin for us, who
 no sin, that we might be made the righteousness
 l in him.” Thou hast borne the sins of many,
 thy precious blood-shedding hast blotted them
 : and, perfect in thee, they appear before the

Father. My soul, canst thou think of these glorious truths with indifference? see thyself a sinner, before a God who is purity itself, and to whom thou dar'st lift thy unholy hands, or cast thy impure eyes, or lift thy evil heart, as thou standest in thyself? see thyself freely justified from all things by Christ Jesus Lord; through him enabled to come boldly to the throne of grace; by his Spirit born anew; a new flesh, an eye of faith given, by which thou canst lift thine heart, thine eye, thy hands, to the God of grace and mercy; and must thou not rejoice? I rejoice greatly. Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem humbled to the dust, ye citizens of Zion, and before thine exalted Redeemer. "Hosanna to the Lord

MARCH 3.—*But the Lord is my defence, and my refuge is the Rock of my refuge.*—PSALM xciv. 22.

Oh, my soul, meditate upon this portion of Scripture, and seek the enlightenment of the blessed Spirit to open the eyes of thy understanding, that thou mayest see wondrous things with thy spiritual eye of faith which thy natural eye neither knew, nor understood. "The Lord is my defence!" From what? From the wrath which thy heart cannot comprehend, nor thy tongue utter; for that which the eye of faith perceives is so vast—so wonderful, that an eternity only can receive it. The Lord is thy defence from the wrath of judgment from the condemnation for, and dominion of, sin; from the wiles of the devil, and the plots of thine enemies. He is thy defence under all trials—at all times; a sure defence of all who put their trust in him. He will be thy defence when friends forsake—when thou art forsaken—when all thine idols are taken from thee. He is thy defence by night and by day; about thy person

and about thy bed. Does my soul realize this at all times? Alas! an evil heart of unbelief shrinks from a pelting storm, is scorched by a fiery trial, trembles at the roaring tempest, despairs at a delayed release, impatient under a resistance to thine own will—forgetting that the “Lord is thy defence.” My soul, how humbling are these truths! and yet at times thou seemest to rise above all surrounding calamities, and trials; soaring above earth, and pressing toward heaven, viewing in reality the Lord as a defence on the right and on the left; encompassed by his love, his faithfulness, his mercy, his tenderness, his wisdom, his righteousness, his word, his truth—yea, all truth; and, eternal praises be unto his holy name, the Lord is not only thy defence, but *thy God*, and the Rock of thy refuge; and not only strong, firm, durable, remaining for ever immovable, but *thy refuge*. Yes, my soul, the Lord may be thy defence when thou art perfectly unconscious of it. But to behold him as the *Rock of thy refuge*—oh, inexpressible privilege! Where can the sinner, the distressed, the afflicted, the persecuted, the forsaken, the tried, the tempted, hide? Where can they rest? Look unto Jesus, thy God, and the Rock of thy refuge. Here thou art safe; here thou canst rest; here find shelter from every earthly trial; here the poor and needy are fed—the weak strengthened—the faint revived—the troubled comforted. On this “Rock of ages” is a refuge for time and eternity. Oh, my soul, why art thou ever cast down? Flesh is weak, and flesh is powerful; strong in rebellion—weak in resistance; firm in effecting its own desires—weak in conforming to the will of God. “But the Lord is my defence—the Rock of my refuge:” my *hope*, my *trust*, my *all*.

MARCH 4.—*Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of Hosts.*—JER. xv. 16.

The words of the prophet come upon my soul with forcible self-application, reviewing the time when the sovereign power of God arrested the dark mind, and brake the obdurate and rebellious heart. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them." Oh, my soul, how was this treasure found? Was it by thine own labours, or according to thine own will? Alas; thy labours are vain, and thy will continually rejecting the precious seed, until the Spirit of the Most High prepare the heart, and open the eyes. "The Lord is found of them that seek him not." He cometh suddenly to his temple, or he delayeth the time according to his sovereign will; and oh, the delight of the soul that finds, and eats! Truly, it is a feast incomprehensible to those who have not tasted. It is sweeter than honey; more precious than frankincense; more lasting than all the treasures of the earth; living waters, healing the broken-hearted; heavenly bread giving eternal life; precious fountain, source of all true and lasting enjoyment. And can my soul say, with the prophet, "Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart"? "Happy are they who know the joyful sound"—who abide under the shadow of thy wings—who rest in thy love. How great is the rejoicing of the sin-burdened soul, when brought to look unto Jesus to be saved; when by faith it can feast on the heavenly bread, and see all sin blotted out by the blood of the "Lamb of God;" see that "new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth." One with the Father and the

My soul, is not this enough to be the joy and
 of thy heart? What are all the trials of
 to the soul that can realize such a blessed,
 ion? "I am called by thy name, O Lord
 Hosts." Who hath obtained this privilege?
 us it been accomplished? Through whom art
 polluted sinner, united to a pure, a holy God?
 m has this great truth been revealed unto
 "Wonderful are thy ways, Lord God Al-
 !" Wonderful thy plans, thy love, thou only
 e eternal Jehovah! Wonderful thy work, O
 God manifest in the flesh! Wonderful thy
 oly Spirit of the living God, who taketh of
 ugs of Jesus, and shows them unto us, the
 s of his mercy—the objects of his love, his
 l sovereign grace. Yes, Lord, thy words were
 nd I did eat them, and they were words of
 life;—found in them "joy unspeakable, and
 ory;"—found them the rejoicing of my heart,
 ; in the Lord. Praise, eternal praise to the
 Glory and honour be ascribed to the eternal
 One.

5.—*And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto
 fear not; thou shalt not die.*—JUDGES vi. 23.
 the Lord speaks peace unto thee, my soul,
 take it away—what can give sorrow? When
 l says to the guilty conscience, the self-con-
 the law-stricken, the trembling sinner, with a
 nd contrite heart, "Fear not; thou shalt not
 o shall condemn? The Lord alone giveth a
 sing understanding; a perfect peace, a last-
 e. When the Lord speaks in the heart by
 , "*Fear not,*" his love is acknowledged, and

fear cast out. When he says "Peace," the storm is hushed the waves subside, the winds obey, and all within is calm. Blessed sound, "Thou shalt not die." Under the law-dispensation Gideon trembled, because he saw an angel of the Lord face to face. God, out of Christ, "is a consuming fire;" and if Gideon had the promise of the Lord for the preservation of his mortal body, is it not blessed to have his promise for the eternal life of the soul? For I must look beyond the grave; this mortal body I must quit, and leave it with its parent earth, a lifeless corpse. The death of the soul, who can understand? It cannot die. Eternal death is not annihilation; it is eternal darkness, forever banished from the presence of the Lord, who is all light—who only is eternal life. And has the voice of the Lord reached thee, my soul, saying, "Fear not; thou shalt not die?" Has peace been whispered by the still small voice? Dost thou feel that love which casteth out fear? Hast thou been convinced of sin—pierced with the stings of conscience—heard the terror of the law, "The soul that sinneth it shall die?" and has the Lord spoken "peace," with "Fear not, thou *shalt* not die?" Who hath power to forgive sins? Who can save the soul from eternal death—eternal darkness—eternal woe? God only! My soul, behold the Angel of the covenant—the Sacrifice—the Mediator—the Reconciler—the Sin-bearer! The Lord is no longer a consuming fire: by Jesus he speaketh "peace"—"glad tidings!" he saith thy sins are forgiven, thou shalt not die. "Fear not," is Mercy's voice—love casteth out fear, and Jesus is the only way to life immortal and eternal peace.

MARCH 6.—*And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage : for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.*—JOSHUA x. 25.

Thine enemies, my soul, are numerous and mighty—daily contending with thee, they harass and perplex, often cast thee down, despairing of their being overcome ; but look up—mark what Joshua said unto his people, “ Fear not.” He had called the men of Israel to put their feet upon the necks of the captive kings ; he admonishes, and gives them a promise, “ Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? ”—why dost thou fear—why art thou dismayed when thine enemies arise, seeing thou hast a greater than Joshua on thy side—the Captain of thy salvation ? Ah, thine eye wanders from thy heavenly Leader, faith fails, and the foes come on thee like a flood. Well is it that *his* eye wanders not from thee, so that if thou art cast down thou shalt not be destroyed. Joshua says, “ Thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.” Do not think to sit at ease and cry, “ Lord, help ! ” then sleep, and unresistingly let the enemies come upon thee, and expect to put thy feet upon their necks. Oh, beware of ease ! Wage continual war with thy three great opponents—lay not down thine arms—fight in the name of the Lord ! slumber not—set a watch on the weakest wall ; cry unto the Lord, he will assuredly help thee, and enable thee to put thy feet upon the necks of thy foes—the enemies against whom you *fight*. “ Fear not, the Lord is with thee ; be not dismayed, he is thy God.” Be strong in the Lord and the power of his might—be of good *courage*. *But thou dare not cease to fight—then*

thou art overcome—neglect to watch the foes creep in—give one step, they take the rest. Be jealous of thyself—presume not on any fancied strength of thine own, for thou art perfect weakness; the Lord alone can help thee. But cease to cry unto him, cease to fight, thou wilt be taken captive, and thus thine enemies triumph over thee. But thy eternal life cannot be touched—that is safe, “Hid with Christ in God.” If we are overcome by enemies, and fall into the snare of the devil, we may lose the joys of salvation, and go mourning to the grave; but the arch foe cannot wrest a soul from Jesus—none can pluck one of his sheep from his hand. O Lord, do thou help with thy strength! Without thee we can do nothing—with thee all things.

MARCH 7.—*To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God: that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified, by faith that is in me.*—ACTS xxvi. 18.

The great apostle, our beloved brother Paul, was sent a ministering angel to the darkened nations that had no knowledge of God, who were worshipping idols, and paying homage to the host of heaven; these had only the light of nature; but the apostle teaches, that those who were under the law were alike guilty before God—both Jew and Gentile equally sinners, for there is no respect of persons with God. And am I not a witness that there are who bear the name of Christ, yet are walking in darkness, under the power of *Satan*? Circumcision availeth not for the salvation

of the soul, neither does the name of Christian benefit, "but a new creature." Jew and Gentile are all under the curse of sin—all blind by nature; the Spirit "must open the eyes, turn from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, to receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me." These are the words of the Lord to the persecuting Jew, who was going forth in spiritual blindness, when his ears were opened to hear the voice of Jesus, whose natural eyes were darkened for a season, but into whose soul shone the resplendent glory of the revelation of Jesus Christ, and instantly he conferred not with flesh and blood; and was sent to preach the "glad tidings" to those who were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, to receive inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith that is in *me*," the Saviour says. Surely these words intimate a great and blessed truth; if sanctified by the faith of Christ, his people are undoubtedly safe—set apart—kept and preserved for their glorious inheritance by the faith of the blessed Redeemer, and that is the faith of God which must stand for ever. "For what," says the apostle, "if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make *the faith* of God of none effect? God forbid; yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." The faithfulness of God cannot fail—the blood of Christ has not been shed in vain—the Spirit's work who can hinder? All who are ordained unto eternal life, *shall* believe; and all who believe, *shall* be saved. With the Almighty there is no peradventure, what he hath said is done. What can my soul say to these things? Have *you* not been brought out of heathen darkness, from the power of Satan, in whose chains you were a willing captive,

though unconscious of it? brought to see him whom you had rejected, the all in all, and "altogether lovely?" Have you not received forgiveness of sins, and do you not believe that you have an inheritance among those who are set apart—sanctified—by faith that is in Jesus; *this is faith* that abideth without wavering. You can trust to his faith—rest in his love—depend on his word—lean on that Rock of Ages whose faithfulness will stand for ever. Oh, sing eternal praises to him—Glory, glory to his name for evermore!

MARCH 8.—*O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: but our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.*—
JER. xiv. 7.

The prophet, under anguish of mind for the sins of his nation, doeth that which believers are continually constrained to do; they come before the Lord confessing their sins individually, while the prophetic prayer may be offered for the Church universal. My soul can truly say, mine iniquities testify against me, my backslidings are many, I have sinned against thee; but, O Lord, forbear, for thy name's sake! "thou shouldst mark iniquity, who shall stand?" thou number our backslidings, how can we look up? Oh, the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, unto thee must we look! O Jesus, thou art no longer as a wayfaring man, thou hast promised to be with thy people, thy spiritual Israel even unto the end: thou, who hast blotted out their iniquities, wilt heal their backslidings; but I turn unto me, saith the Lord. My soul, take a retrospect of thyself, from the first dawning of the re-

lections of nature, to the first impressions of grace—from that eventful era, view thyself to the present day, and what dost thou see? Can the spiritual eye discern anything in nature wherewith to be satisfied? Do not thine iniquities testify against thee? Are not thy backslidings many? “O, thou hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble!” in thee only can the soul be satisfied; and blessed be thy “holy name,” by the power of free and sovereign grace, the soul is abundantly satisfied, as with marrow and fatness *in* thee, and *with* thee! Looking unto, resting upon, thee, there is a perfect satisfaction: out of thee there is no good—in thee every good. Oh, my soul, “the hope of Israel” has made perfect satisfaction for the iniquities of his people; not one sin shall testify against thee, in that great and awful day, when all shall appear before his “judgment seat.” If thou hast been washed in his precious blood—if clothed in his perfect robe—if one of those for whom he has died, for whom he has risen, and sits at the right hand of God—for whom “he will come the second time without sin unto salvation”—then thou wilt be one of that blessed number *in whom* he will be glorified—then thou wilt reign with him for ever, no more backslide from him, but share for ever that kingdom which he has prepared for all who love him. O Lord, we confess our sins! we grieve for our backslidings of heart, our manifold transgressions. In pity to the weakness of the flesh, send thy Holy Spirit, to guard and watch—to help our infirmities—to subdue the actings of nature—to increase the influence of grace! Grant that the eye, the heart, the affections, may be fixed on thee, thou “hope of Israel, and Saviour thereof!”

MARCH 9.—*And he said, Wherefore doth thus pursue after his servant? for what have or what evil is in mine hand?*—1 SAM. XX

There is a similarity in the experience of age after age; in many ways an exact agreement in others a difference in degree; and some occurring under peculiar circumstances, understood by another, though not experienced by others. Believers pass on to the end of their journey having the trial of an enemy being stirred up to them. Consider attentively, my soul, the sun before thee, and, by thy Spirit's application meditation profit! David, under repeated persecutions from Saul, proved himself to be a man of God—not daring to take vengeance. Under derangement, or, when an evil spirit troubled David's harp alone had soothed him; under persecution of hatred and malice, he persecuted death, and David was forced to flee from him. "He hunted him like a partridge upon a mountain." Yet when in David's power, David touched him. Hear the word of the man "after God's order" to King Saul, "If the Lord has stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering." Many are stirred up by God to reprove his children, and their sin: the effect will be the offering of a broken and contrite heart, which the Lord despise. David's were not mere words—he afterwards, as seen in Shimei, "Let him curse the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David." They be the children of men, cursed be they by the Lord, for they have driven me out this land, abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, *serve other gods.*" Woe unto them who

Lord's anointed! Woe unto them who save those whom the Lord has rejected, and reject those whom the Lord has saved! But David, though driven out from abiding in his earthly inheritance, could not be driven from his eternal abiding-place. No, my soul, not all the powers of earth or hell can pluck one of Christ's sheep from his hand! they may kill the body, but the soul can never perish; the enemy that is stirred up against thee, whether of the Lord or of man, may vex and distress, but cannot destroy: all is for thy profit—to try thy faith—to prove thy spirit—to show thee more of thyself—show what is flesh and what is spirit, what is nature and what is grace. David says, "And behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes (not of King Saul, but) of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation." What a lesson, oh, my soul, is here! David would not avenge himself—he would not touch the Lord's anointed king; he gave himself into the hands of the Lord—in him he trusted, on him relied to bring him out of all tribulation. Saul was the persecutor! David passively endured his cruel treatment, till forced to flee from his presence—then spares his life when he was in his power—leaves all with his God, and mourns at the death of his most bitter foe. David's trust is not misplaced—he is delivered, for he trusted in one who is faithful, powerful, yea, Almighty—willing and able to save all who put their trust in him; one who seeth not as man seeth—one who judgeth righteous judgment, who knoweth the heart, and by whom actions are weighed. Grant, O Lord, that our meditations may profit—to shun that which is evil, to follow that which is good! Oh, lift thy heart unto thy God! leave all things

with him—he will bring thee out of all thy tribulations! Let Shimei curse, but curse not thou again; let Saul persecute—render unto him good for evil, bearing, enduring all for his sake who hath borne so much for thee; lift thine eyes to a higher than David—look at the “meek and lowly” Jesus, and canst thou dare arraign thy poor fellow-worm? Wilt thou condemn a fellow-sinner? Oh, reflect upon thy neglect of him who has done all for thee in time and eternity! “Be still, and know that he is God!” Leave thy persecutors with him—entreat him for them—he will deliver thee from the power of thine enemies, and thou shalt yet praise the God of thy salvation.

MARCH 10.—*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith meekness, temperance: against such there is no law*
—GAL. v. 22, 23.

My soul, here is David's spirit set forth in the new dispensation; here is the spirit of David's Lord; here is a rule for those who are born of the Spirit: and do we not need much “searchings of heart,” to know if we bring forth the fruits of the Spirit? To love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind, is the first and great commandment; and the second, to love thy brother as thyself: and this must be the fruit of the Spirit—joy and peace in believing—joy in the Lord—peace in the Holy Ghost—long-suffering under every trial that flesh is heir to—gentle to all men, doing good unto all—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—meek and temperate—crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit; and what is it, my soul, to live and to walk in the Spirit? Do ye, who are made

the Spirit, walk in the Spirit? do ye bring the fruits of the Spirit? is that mind within you in Christ Jesus? Why art thou left in this cess of sin, after the Lord has been pleased to free thee by his Spirit? The Lord's ways are not the same; various are his dealings with his people—some are quickly taken to their eternal home, others tarry in the wilderness for a lengthened period, but we are assured it is not the fruit we bring forth that titles us to a place in the kingdom of glory; secured by the all-sufficient work and sacrifice of our blessed Redeemer; but the apostle exhorts thee to walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh. These are opposed to each other, and cause continual struggles; the Spirit desires to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, and rejoices to see the flesh crucified, pride mortified, the heart and faith tried and proved. The works of the Spirit are manifest—the fruits of the Spirit must be manifested; but flesh rebels, and murmurs, and resists. The heart's desire is to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. When made alive by the Spirit we go on to glory; and being brought from the bondage of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, we come unto thy glorious Head! consider thy union with Christ, by which alone thou canst bring forth fruit unto God! Believing that Jesus has finished the work of salvation, what is thy desire? It is to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, to walk in the Spirit, and to be in the Spirit, that earth may be nothing, and all—rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh.

MARCH 11.—*Now, therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord, even thou only.*—ISAIAH XXXVII. 20.

Many and strong are the enemies which rise up to hurt and assault thee, O my soul ! May we not liken the Assyrian king to the “ prince of the power of the air,” who, with his satanic legion, goes about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour the people of God ! But whom does he defy—against whom is he set up ! Is it not against him who is come to bruise his head—to destroy his kingdom ? Does he not reproach the living God, when he assaults God’s chosen people ! Does he not work by that emissary Rabshakeh (the flesh), to defy the strongholds of Zion ! “ Will thy God deliver thee out of our hand ? ” Alas, my soul how canst thou contend with these mighty foes ! Weaker than water, thou hast no strength ; like a bruised reed, thou art shaken with every wind ; there is neither priest, nor prophet, nor elder nigh to give thee counsel. But is there not one greater than these ! Is there not still the God of Hezekiah, the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, the God alone of all the kingdoms of the earth ? Canst thou not present thy petition at the throne of the Holy One of Israel ! “ Incline thine ear, O Lord, and hear ; open thine eyes, O Lord, and see ” the temptations of thy servant : see, the enemy comes to reproach thee, the living God ! My soul, thou hast a mighty conqueror out of self, through whom thou mayst defy the satanic legion, and thy fleshly legions ? Rest not until thine enemies are under thy feet ; fight in the strength of Jesus, then thou shalt overcome at last ; trust to him, thy foes shall be subdued—when they assault, flee to him,

e will lay them in the dust. He is the Lord of
 losts—he is the God of Israel, dwelling between the
 cherubims. As he hath saved thee with an everlasting
 salvation, from eternal death, from the power of
 Satan, and has translated thee into his own kingdom,
 will he save thee from the power of the flesh, the
 dominion of sin: soon will all thine enemies be slain;
 and when the last enemy, death, is conquered, then
 thou shalt rise, with thy glorified body, on the resur-
 rection morn, and behold thine enemies all dead corpses
 Satan and sin—flesh and corruptions—death and
 sorrows—all conquered; thou shalt see them no more
 forever! “And all the kingdoms of the earth shall
 know that thou art the Lord, even thou only.”

MARCH 12.—*But God raised him from the dead.*—

ACTS xiii. 30.

Jesus, holy, harmless, undefiled, could not see cor-
 ruption—sin had no dwelling-place within him—
 Satan tried him—death passed upon him—the grave
 received him; “But God raised him from the dead.”
 Satan had no power over him—death could not hold
 him—the grave must give him up!

Meditate, my soul, one little moment, upon the
 glorious resurrection of thy Redeemer, who gave him-
 self up unto death, “that through death he might
 destroy him who had the power of death;” lay down
 the life that he might take it again: descended into
 the grave to rise from it by the power of the God-
 ad, to bring many sons to glory. Oh, blessed
 Redeemer, glorified Saviour; fain would my soul ex-
 tend, to view by faith some of the glories of thy
 resurrection! Thy work on earth finished, thy last
 in the flesh, for thy people, was to die, to shed thy

blood for the remission of their sins. Jesus died to conquer death, and, rising from the dead, gave eternal life to as many as the Father had given him before the foundation of the world, and, as the forerunner of his redeemed, entered into that within the veil, made a High Priest for ever. His resurrection foiled Satan and all his satanic enemies, proved the verity of his words to his unbelieving disciples, and gave them an indubitable proof that he was in truth the Christ, the Son of God, and ensuring the resurrection of his saints; "For now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." O Jesus, what glories hast thou procured for thy people!

My soul, how feeble thy praises! how poor the utterance of thy thoughts! Language cannot express, the heart cannot pour out, its feelings on such a theme of wonder. But "wonderful are all thy works, Lord God Almighty; thy ways past finding out!" Is there anything too hard for the Lord? The power that formed the universe, gave to atoms being, motion, life, faculties, intellect, reason, a mind to reflect, a soul for immortality! Can it be wonderful that he should raise from the dead? Could any power but that of God, the Creator of all things, perform this wondrous act? No, God alone, who made heaven and earth, can bring the dead to life; Jesus alone, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt, can give eternal life; the Spirit alone, proceeding from the Father and the Son, can quicken into spiritual life the dead in trespasses and sins—these are the Three in One, that bear record in heaven. Thus, God raises from the dead, by his Spirit's power, and our Immanuel gives eternal life to as many as the Father has given to him. *As God raised him from the dead, so are his members*

quickened into spiritual life, and walk, in newness of life, the way to everlasting life. Jesus could not be holden by death, neither can those who are ordained to eternal life; they must be brought forth from spiritual death, the grave of sin—brought to the light, to see the face of God in Jesus Christ: not one can be left to see corruption, for “God raises them from the dead”—they rise up a numerous army, to bless and praise the God of grace and love—the Saviour of peace and righteousness—the Spirit of holiness and purity; to behold the fruits of thy resurrection, O Jesus, to partake of all thy glories, when this mortal part shall have put on immortality, and, rising to everlasting life, shall join the heavenly choir in everlasting hymns of praise, for ever, in thy glorious presence, O Lord Jesus! “Thou that liveth, and was dead, and behold thou art alive for evermore!”

MARCH 13.—*But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me; for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted.*—EZEK. iii. 7.

Truly is the house of Israel a rebellious house—impudent and hard-hearted! Thou canst not, my soul, confine thy thoughts to literal Israel; their history is thy history—their rebellion thine—thy history that of all the spiritual seed. God speaks by his providences—warns by afflictions—but ye will not hear; he sends his law, with all its terrors, but ye will not obey; he sends his prophets, with foreheads of adamant, harder than flint, to deliver his message; but ye will not hearken; nay, though one rise from the dead ye will not believe! yea, though many be brought to life before *thine eyes*, thou dost treat it as an idle

tale—until grace, sovereign grace, arrest thy wandering feet, and the Almighty power of the Holy Spirit raise thee from death to life ; and what, O house of Israel, art thou then ? A rebellious house. Oh, ye prophets of the Lord, come forth and warn the rebellious children ; fear them not, be not dismayed at their looks—ye faithful few, stand forth and warn the many ! Oh, my soul, look unto thyself ! What hast thou been, since infinite mercy brought thee to the light—since sovereign power gave thee spiritual life—since redeeming love said, “ thy sins are forgiven ; ” hast thou not been rebellious in thought, word, and deed ? “ Ah, Lord God, thou knowest ! ” flesh rebels, but Spirit fights—Satan rages, but grace resists—the world tempts, but faith overcomes. There are foes without and within ; but put thy trust in thy God—he will make thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their forehead. Be not dismayed at the looks or words of thine outward foes—be not cast down by thy foes within. If the Lord be with thee, who are they that shall harm thee ? Jesus, thy strength—thou art brass ; thy rock—thou art adamant ; thy shield—thou art secure ; thy refuge—thou art safe ! Fight, in the name of the Lord, with thy rebellious heart, thou shalt prevail ; fight with those who are set against thee, they shall be subdued ; fight against the whole house of Israel, if the Lord send thee ; fear them not though they be a rebellious house. Look unto him who is strong—trust to him who is faithful. Oh, house of Israel, consider ! Jesus will never forsake his sheep, the flock of his pasture, though they be a rebellious house ; eternal love has marked them for his own—eternal love will keep them to the end ! Give, then, eternal praise to the Eternal Three !

MARCH 14.—*And when David inquired of the Lord, he said, Thou shalt not go up; but come upon them over against the mulberry-trees.*—2 SAM. v. 23.

How precious, my soul, is the trial of thy faith! Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord!" is a continual admonition. Contemplate the passage of scripture before thee; reflect on the cause preceding and the effect following. David inquired of the Lord. The Philistines come up again and again, to harass the Lord's anointed; David asks, is answered, and says. Oh, that I may meditate, to profit thereby! In all thy ways inquire of the Lord; leave the Philistines with him; stir not until he tell thee to move—When thou hearest the sound of going, in the tops of the mulberry-trees, then thou shalt bestir thyself." Wait the Lord's time—do as he commands thee; he will all go out before thee to smite thine enemies. David did as the Lord commanded, and could not but prevail. How much hast thou to learn! Every trial shows thee more of thyself—thy lack of faith, thy want of confidence. But God is mighty, and will carry on the work. Thou shalt be proved, to increase thy faith—tried, to show thee more of thy God. Stir not till he tell thee plainly, by his providences, to go forth; watch the sound in the mulberry-trees, and when the command comes from the Lord thou canst not delay; thou shalt not shrink though a host be encompassed around thee. The Lord is with thee! Jesus, thy all, who "will not lay upon thee more than thou art able to bear," but—blessed promise!—"will with the temptation, make a way to escape." The enemies are mighty, but the Lord is Almighty! they have power, but he is all power! they are strong, but he is thy "*strength and thy shield!*" Oh, trust him!

His protecting arm is around thee—his wa
over thee—his loving-kindness encircles
inexpressible blessings of his salvation
thee! Sound, then, thy hallelujahs to th
grace, love, and mercy! bid thine enemies
his name, and in the strength of Jesus
overcome.

MARCH 15.—*For this cause I bow my knees
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom
family in heaven and earth is named.*—
14, 15, and following verses.

My soul, thou art most deeply impressed
sense of thy sinfulness; thou seest thyself,
corrupt and vile, unholy in all thy ways;
wert living without God in the world—wi
knowledge of him or his word—alienated
and in open rebellion against his revea
Grace, sovereign grace, has taught thee
more than this. Convinced of sin, thy
heart was brought to bow submissively to
of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom thou did
the only refuge.

What a blessed portion of Scripture for
soul, to contemplate! Again and again
ponder over it, and unceasingly desire to
apostle's prayer realized in my experienc
strengthened with might, by his Spirit, in
man, that Christ may dwell in my heart by
be able, being rooted and grounded in lov
prehend, with all saints, what is the breadt
depth, and height; to know the love of Chr
passeth knowledge; to be filled with all the
God! My soul, what can surpass this?

ward! Holy Spirit, help! that Christ may dwell deeply in my heart by faith—to be rooted in love—to comprehend somewhat of his infinite love, incomprehensible, unfathomable—extending beyond conception—lasting through eternity—enduring in time what *human* nature could neither bear nor comprehend—shame, contempt, mocking, railing, suffering, death! And this not all—this nothing compared with the agonies of soul—bearing the sins, all the sins of the objects of thy great, thy amazing love. Oh, adorable Saviour! thou only immortal, eternal—one with the Father—shall I ever comprehend thy boundless love? Yes, I may, with all saints. To *know* that love, which passeth knowledge, is “our bliss below;” to *know* that thou hast loved *me*, *died* for *me*, is the only abiding happiness upon earth, for one, *spiritually* convinced of sin, to follow thee, to trust in, submit to thee, are the privileges of faith bestowed; but the rebellious will, the snares of Satan, the corruptions of flesh, are continually striving to disturb the peace which faith gives; but eternal praises to the love of Jesus, *this* is everlasting! and, “unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end! Amen.”

MARCH 16.—*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.*—2 COR. iv. 7.

The constant aim of the apostle was to abase the creature, and to exalt his Lord and Master. He preached not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord. And that *light*, which had been so gloriously, so power-

fully shed abroad in his heart, he holds as a treasure in an earthen vessel. Soul, consider this, and for thy profit seek the aid of the Holy Spirit, to make self-application, and say what thou knowest of the earthen vessel, and of the treasure contained therein. Alas! thou well knowest that the vessel is earthly, sensual, devilish! in it there is no good thing; it is altogether corrupt, filthy, polluted; out of it proceedeth all manner of evil; it is deceitful above all things, cleaving to the dust of this earth, and the dust cleaving to it—"Wash it with snow water, make it never so clean," yet shall it be plunged in the ditch again and again; earthly it is, and to its parent earth shall it return; earthly in habits, sensual in desires, devilish in temper, self the centre of all its actions, seeking its own gratification in word, in deed, filled with its own nothingness, proud of the emptiness which makes it as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Earthy in pursuits, corrupt in propensities, evil in practice. In manifestation, deceitful to others—in motives, deceiving itself—in principle, deceitful towards God. Perishable in matter, it must see corruption—sinful by nature, it goes to the grave a vile body. But, my soul, turn from the earthen vessel to the treasure it contains—"The light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ!" Oh, my soul, how dost thou appreciate this treasure, which every vessel born of the Spirit contains?—"Christ in you, the hope of glory." Canst thou estimate the value of this pearl of great price—this glorious light—these unsearchable riches? Oh, no! Infinite in design, incomprehensible in effect, inestimable in value: it is a treasure surpassing all that can

be conceived, of glory, might, majesty, dominion; a treasure for which all earthly things are to be forsaken; a treasure compared to which all earthly attainments are but dross and dung; a treasure boundless in extent, is passing knowledge; a treasure inexhaustible, for it endureth for ever; a treasure of which the natural man is totally ignorant—which is to the wise man foolishness, and to the self-righteous a stumbling-block—which the spiritual man cannot fathom, for the deeper he searches the more he finds, and the more he finds the more he wants and desires; the more he sees of its excellency, the more highly it is valued, and the the less he esteems all things besides. A treasure which the Almighty Jehovah bestows—the Almighty Saviour contains—the Almighty Spirit reveals, but which an eternity only can unfold; a treasure which only the sinner needs, which the needy only value. And this treasure, oh, my soul, we have in earthen vessels, that “the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” The glory, the honour, the praise be thine, Almighty Father, who hath put thy Spirit into earthen vessels, whereby they cry, “Worthy, worthy the Lamb that was slain!”

MARCH 17.—*Yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.*—ISAIAH lix. 15.

Eternal praises be to thy holy name, Lord God Almighty! Thou great Jehovah, three Persons in One Incomprehensible! in whom alone dwelleth immortality! to whom alone belongeth sovereign power, uncontrollable, irresistible, invincible! Eternal praises be unto thee! Thy truth cannot

fail, for the word is gone out of thy mouth, and shall not return unto thee void, but shall accomplish thy pleasure, and shall prosper whereunto it is sent. Yea, man may fail in preaching the truth; in confessing the truth, in believing the truth; but the truth itself will stand for ever—"Yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." And this, O Lord, thou knoweth, thy truth is perverted, maligned, denied, and they who confess it become a prey; truth, judgment, justice, equity fail, and they who depart from evil become a prey; but "the Lord sees it and is displeased." Again, eternal praises be unto him! his own arm has brought salvation—he has put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation—the Redeemer has come to Zion. Yea, Lord, all things may fail, but thou abidest for ever! Thy work, O Jesus, cannot fail, for it is finished! thy word cannot fail, for thou art the truth! thy power cannot fail, for it is omnipotent! thy love cannot fail, for it is everlasting! thy grace cannot fail, for it is sovereign! thy Spirit cannot fail, for it is immutable! ratifying the word of the Father, and sealing the work of the Son. Oh, my soul, conclude as thou didst begin—Eternal praises to Jehovah, Three in One!

MARCH 18.—*I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near; and I will heal him.*—ISAIAH lvii. 19.

"I create the fruit of the lips." Lord, thou doest all things. Thou givest the new heart to believe in thee, and cause the lips to confess thy name; thou sendest thy gospel to proclaim "Peace, peace to him

that is far off, and to him that is near; "thou sendest thy Spirit to break the stony heart, then shonest thyself in Jesus, to heal; thou givest thy Spirit, to pray, and to render back what thou bestowest; thou givest light and darkness, joy and sorrow, peace and war—and all things shall work together for good to them that wait upon thee. From thee, O Lord, is our fruit found! Thy branches, which abide in thee, thou burgeest, that they may bring forth more fruit—fruits of faith, hope, love—fruits of righteousness and true holiness. "Giving all diligence," saith the apostle, 'to add to your faith, virtue and knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness; and to these, brotherly-kindness and love: for if these be in you and abound, you are neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' "But vain is it," saith the Lord, "to draw near with the lips, when the heart is far from me." But thou doth create the fruit of the lips, as well as a new heart, and renew a right spirit, by which alone the soul can draw nigh unto thee, and present the body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, unto God, by the mercies of God—through the merits, the sufferings, the one only sacrifice of our blessed Lord and Redeemer—by whom, O my soul, thou art cleansed from sin—by whom "peace, peace" is proclaimed to the repentant sinner, to him who can scarcely dare to lift his eyes unto thee, as well as to him who comes boldly to the throne of grace—by whom alone is the sinner healed—by whom only is he "seed of Israel justified, and shall glory." What doth my soul say? Has "peace" been proclaimed to thee? hast thou found joy and peace in believing? Oh, adorable Jesus! a debtor to mercy—a debtor to grace—a *debtor to love*—an eternal debtor to thee—

a justified sinner falls at thy feet, touches the hem of thy garment, crying, "Peace, peace," for whosoever cometh unto thee thou wilt in no wise cast out.

MARCH 19.—*Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me; thou shalt no strange God be in thee.*—PSALM lxxxix. 8 and following verses.

"The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did." Meditate, my soul, on this portion of Holy Scripture—this touching appeal to the Most High, through the inspired Psalmist to rebellious Israel, and say if the Lord thy God has a rebellious Israel still—rebels groping in darkness while yet in spiritual Egypt—rebels when "called out of darkness into marvellous light." "But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would not of me, so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels." Deplorable state! And is it not the same in the gospel day? Are there not many who walk to the end of life after their own counsel? and do not these walk into certain destruction? and would not all mankind so walk were it not for the free mercy and sovereign grace of God? But, blessed be thy holy name, thou hast reserved unto thyself a seed to serve thee, though "Israel was none of thee!" Yes, thou hast reserved a people to show forth thy praise, who are "made willing in the day of thy power;" who *shall* hearken unto thee, who walk in *thy way*, to everlasting life; whose enemies thou wilt subdue, and turn thy hand against their adversaries, for thou art stronger than the strong and armed, unto whom the haters of the Lord shall submit *themselves*; whose time shall endure for ever—who

thou dost feed with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the Rock dost thou satisfy them—Glorious gospel day ! Oh, my soul, open thy mouth wide, that thou mayest be filled with the fruits of this heavenly land ; look unto him who hath procured all things for thee richly to enjoy ; but beware of Israel's sin—a wandering and idolatrous heart, for though a renewed soul cannot be eternally lost, yet it may lose the light of the Lord's countenance, and lie down in sorrow. Such a darkness is far worse than Egyptian darkness. Lord Jesus, our eyes are up unto thee ! it is in thy strength we stand—by thy power upheld—by thy prayer kept. “Father, keep in thine own name those thou hast given me.” Blessed Lord, thou still liveth, and *ever* liveth, to make intercession ! Oh, let not the sheep of thy pasture sin against light and knowledge ! Rebels by nature, it is thou alone that canst subdue the host of enemies. Grant that thy people may hearken unto thee, and help thy Israel to walk in thy ways ! My soul, look at thy privileges ! look unto Jesus, suffering and dying for thee, and shall not the “love of Christ constrain thee” to walk as becometh the redeemed of the Lord ? Jesus, all must come from thyself ! We are, in ourselves, perfect weakness—every good and perfect gift cometh from above. Thou must guide, direct, keep by thy Spirit, thy rebellious Israel. Thy power has brought them to thy kingdom of grace, and thy power will keep them for thy kingdom of glory.

MARCH 20.—*Stand up and bless the Lord for ever and ever ; and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.*—NEH. ix. 5.
Is not thy spirit stirred within thee, my soul, while

meditating on these words of the Old Testament saints? Art *thou* not lifted up to bless and praise the Lord thy God, for the marvellous revelation of himself in the face of Jesus Christ, vouchsafed to the saints in this latter day? Stand up, my soul, and bless and praise his glorious name, for ever and ever! Stand up for his word, his truth, his cause! Stand up for his everlasting love, strong as death! his faithfulness, which endureth for ever; his mercy, which is sovereign and free! Stand up for the limitation of his grace, the freedom of his will, the execution of his justice! Stand up for pardon *only* by the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth from all sin—for justification through his righteousness, which covereth all iniquity—sanctification by the power of the Holy Spirit, which dwelleth in all the elect people of God, a people set apart for the Master's use! Stand up and praise the Lord thy God, for free and unmerited salvation through Jesus Christ! Stand up and give him all the glory; and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and all praise! Amen and Amen.

MARCH 21.—*But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.*—2 TIM. iii. 14.

Mark, O my soul, this admonition of the apostle, not only to his beloved Timothy, but to thee, and all the members of the Lord's mystical body—"Continue in the things thou hast learned and been assured of." Beware of seducing men and devil, who are ever ready to beguile the unstable, and harass and tempt the believer who is strong in the faith, to pull him from the stronghold in the things he has learned and

as been assured of ; continue in those things which are for thy peace ; continue to look unto Jesus for thy strength ; thy faith, thy hope, thy love, thy *all*, *knowing* of whom thou hast learned them ; *knowing* the power of the Holy Spirit, the sovereignty of God, bestowing grace, the love of Jesus in saving sinners ; knowing that the Holy Spirit has been thy teacher, beware lest thou fall from thine own steadiness. Be not high-minded, but fear ; a multitude of enemies are watching thee ; but do thou, O my soul, watch and pray, looking unto him who is continually watching thee for thy good ; that same Spirit from whom thou hast learned the great and glorious, perfect and finished work of salvation, is able to keep thee, by the power of Jehovah, from whom he purchased, for the love of the Saviour who has purchased and redeemed thee.

From grace you cannot fall, if you have been made partaker of that grace, which giveth the spirit of adoption ; but you may lose the faith in the things which you have learned and been assured of. But we are exhorted to resist the devil, to fight the good fight of faith, to seek the strength of the Lord ; and “unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to preserve us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy ; to the only wise God and Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever ! Amen.”

MARCH 22.—*Arise, shine ; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.*—ISAIAH lx. 1 and following verse.

Who is this to whom these emphatic words are addressed—*Arise, shine ? Is it not a prophetic address*

to the Church, speaking of the most glorious time she has ever witnessed upon earth—*now* past, now accomplished, “For *thy* light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee”? At a time when darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the professing people of God (the visible Church), the Lord Christ—the promised seed—the Redeemer of Israel—the Saviour of the Gentiles—he who brake down the middle wall of partition—he of whom Moses and the prophets spake—came upon earth, arose upon the benighted Church, and manifested his glory upon her; and truly might the prophet call her to arise and shine when her light— and *such* a light! was come, and the glory of the Lord was risen upon her. My soul would leave the general assembly and Church collectively of the first-born, and meditate upon these words of the Spirit-inspired prophet with individual application; and may that same Spirit guide and influence our meditation, without which there can be no profit. Cannot my soul look back to the time when darkness, gross darkness, covered this earthen vessel— when the ears, the eyes, the understanding, were closed to divine things? and can you not remember when thy light came, and the glory of the Lord arose upon thee? and did not the Spirit say, Arise, shine? and does not the Spirit still say, Arise, shine? Yes, and the Spirit says, *thy light* is come; the eyes have been opened to see the deadliness of sin, the ears unstopped to hear the joyful gospel sound, the understanding enlightened to see the glorious light in the face of Christ Jesus the Lord. He, O my soul, is *thy* light; from him thy light emanates—in him is all thy light—out of him is all darkness; he is thy light and thy glory, thy sun and thy shield. Brought out of dark-

ness into this marvellous light, fain would my soul
 exalt thy glorious name. O Lord, thy coming upon
 earth was the light and the glory of thy people; but
 they cannot arise from the dust, they cannot shine
 forth in the splendour which thou hast put upon them
 until thy Spirit be poured out abundantly—then shall
 thy Church shine like gold tried in the fire. But thou,
 O Jesus, art thy people's light; in thee is no darkness;
 thou art all light, dwelling in that light which no
 mortal can approach; thou art an everlasting light,
 and of thy glory there shall be no end; an unchanging
 light; the same that was, and is, and shall be. He
 that hath not this light walketh in darkness, and shall
 not see life; he that hath this light shall never die,
 for he hath everlasting life. Oh, my soul, arise and
 praise thy Lord! the light of his countenance shall
 make thy face to shine; the light of his word shall
 make thy wilderness path straight; the light of his
 Spirit shall guide thee in perplexity, guard thee in
 danger, comfort thee in affliction, lighten thy dark-
 ness, and preserve thee to the end.

MARCH 23.—*For what shall it profit a man if he gain
 the whole world, and lose his own soul? or, what
 shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*—MARK
 viii. 36, 37.

Soul, of what profit will all the perishing things of
 this world be to thy perishing body, if thou, that must
 live through eternity, be eternally lost? Of what
 profit will be all the wealth that can be acquired, all
 the luxuries that can be enjoyed, all the ease that can
 be taken, when thy mortal part shall feed the worms,
 and crumble into dust, and thine immortal be where
 the worm dieth *not*, and the fire is not quenched?

What can a man give in exchange for These words of our Lord were followed by the most solemn, awful import. Art thou ashamed of Jesus? I may reply, in thy name—

“Yes, I may,

When I’ve no sins to wash away.

But when a sinner in our own estimation ashamed of Jesus, who is the only way to —the only propitiation for sin? Oh, how those of whom the Son of Man will be ashamed when he comes in his glory, to judge the world according to the sentence, “Depart from me, ye who are ashamed of the Lord? ashamed of confessing him? ashamed of the creature nothing? ashamed of the atoning blood—of thy sin-covering righteousness? ashamed of thy perfect work of redemption? complete fulfilment of the law? ashamed of thy death, thy rising, thy ascending? ashamed of all this, then must a sinner be ashamed of thee, when thou comest a second time in a sinners’ salvation, to glorify that thou art a sinner saved by grace glorifies that thou art saved—will hail thy coming with shouts of victory, drawn by thy sovereign power of love, thy love, be gathered unto thee, to receive the blessing from thee, the Lord of all and King of all, to dwell with thee for ever! Amen, and Alleluia to the Lord!

MARCH 24.—*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, for he shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.—ISAIAH 61:10*
For why, my soul, wilt thou greatly rejoice?

Lord, and be joyful in thy God? For why? Go, ask thy sins—ask thy rebel heart—ask thy natural enmity to God—his ways, his words, his holiness—ask thy corruptions—ask the powers of darkness—ask the grave, into which thou must shortly go—ask death, who soon shall hold thee in his grasp—ask the prince of this world—ask every thought, every word, every deed, of thy past life—ask time—ask eternity—ask all heaven and all earth—ask, oh, ask the great Redeemer! Look unto him, and, with a holy joy, give forth the wondrous answer—call heaven and earth to witness the transporting sound—call angels and the spirits of the just to join in thy rejoicings, for is there not joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth? Proclaim to all, the wonder-working power of a sovereign God, who hath enabled a sinner, “dead in trespasses and sins,” to arise from spiritual death, and to rejoice, yea, greatly rejoice in the Lord, for—oh, amazing deed! oh, wondrous love!—he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation—he hath covered me with a robe of righteousness!

MARCH 25.—*She said, no man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.*—JOHN viii. 11.

Who dare first cast a stone when Jesus standeth by? Not one! The enemies withdraw one by one; and blessed is the state when left alone with Jesus! Hath no man condemned thee—not *one* whose conscience can say, “I am without sin?” No man, Lord. Neither do I condemn thee. Blessed words to the sin-sick soul! Who can condemn when Jesus acquits? The law condemns, but Jesus speaks the word of gospel-freedom, and *the soul is released from bondage*; sin

accuseth, but Jesus speaks peace ; man accuseth, but Jesus forbears ; Satan tempts, but Jesus disarms the tempter, and casts the strong one out. Let all condemn, if Jesus justify ; let all forsake, if Jesus remain ; let all enemies wage war, if Jesus speak peace. My soul, hast thou been left alone with Jesus ? Have the sweet words of peace reached thine ear ? Hast thou heard, " Neither do I condemn thee ? " Then thou hast also heard, " Go, and sin no more. " Yes, Lord, there is no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. But it is thy presence, thy help, thy power that alone can keep from falling those who have been risen, by grace, into newness of life ; it is thou that must disperse the enemies, give power to the faint, and strength to the weary ; thou must carry on the work thou hast begun, and keep the soul alive which thy Spirit hath quickened.

Blessed Lord, withdraw not thy presence ! leave me not alone with self, the greatest of all enemies ! Oh, stay, and show the light of thy countenance continually ! In thy strength mountains can be moved—without thee we are perfect weakness. Blessed are they whom thou hast justified—they shall not be condemned ; thrice blessed are they who walk continually in the shinings of thy face ; but blessed be all to whom thou hast spoken peace, they shall awake in thy likeness, and see thee as thou art ; they shall be raised incorruptible, without sin, to enjoy thy presence without alloy for evermore ; they shall inherit that eternal life which thou hast procured, by thy death, and secured by thine entrance into the gates of righteousness, and when they shall, in their bodies, stand before thy judgment seat, thou canst not condemn

those for whom thou hast shed thy precious blood ; ten thousand times ten thousand tongues shall worship and adore thee, when they hear, " Come, thou blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for thee." Hallelujah, hallelujah !

MARCH 26.—*Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation ; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.*—ISAIAH xlv. 17.

Israel shall be saved *in the Lord*—not in themselves—with an everlasting salvation—not a salvation for time, but for eternity ; neither shall they be ashamed nor confounded world without end. The Israel of God are his chosen people, saved in Christ Jesus from eternity—ordained to everlasting life from eternity, so they can never be confounded.

My soul, look at thyself ! Canst thou be saved *in* or *by* thyself ? Art thou not ashamed and confounded to see thyself, a wretched sinner ? Yea, let shame and confusion cover thee, and the name of Jesus be exalted above every name in heaven or earth ; sink into the dust, and give the glory, the praise, the honour, to him who alone is worthy, who has saved Israel, saved *thee*, with a salvation that shall endure for ever—saved in the Lord ! And, O my soul, from what art thou saved ? From self, from sin, from Satan, from condemnation, from everlasting death ! Why does my soul remain so dull under the contemplation—such a God—such a Saviour—such a salvation ? Has the value decreased by time—is Jesus less needed, less precious ? Nay, Lord, thy salvation is felt to be more needful every moment, thy value increases as the creature sinks in its own estimation. To be saved *in thee* is the only hope ; to be everlast-

ingly saved belongeth alone to thee; and, looking only to thee, the soul shall not be ashamed or confounded. In the Lord Jesus alone can the soul, sick of sin, weary of the world, its deceptions, its vanities—in Jesus alone can the soul rejoice; and *here* may it rejoice alway! In the Lord ye possess all things—out of him nothing; in him is peace, joy, reconciliation, acceptance—out of him, woe, woe, eternal condemnation, eternal weeping and wailing! Saved in the Lord, of what has the soul to boast? Nothing to boast of, nothing to glory in, but the mercy of God through Jesus our Lord, Israel's God; and of him thou mayest boast all the day long—of him glory, and thou shalt not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

MARCH 27.—*Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments.*—PSALM cxix. from verse 137 to 144.

Blessed Jesus! thou art the first and the last; but “how slow of heart are we to believe all that is written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the Psalms concerning thee.” The psalmist is assuredly speaking prophetically, as Jesus in his state of humiliation, when he sojourned upon earth, and, as a Son, confessed the Godhead to be pre-eminent—“My Father is greater than I.” As a man he cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” as a Son, he was obedient even unto death, not doing his own will. He ministered unto his disciples, and was among them as one that serveth; he did the work his Father gave him to do, and was his servant to do all his pleasure. Who, as Jesus, could see the righteous judgments of *the Most High*? Did not thy zeal consume thee,

use *thine* enemies have forgotten thy Father's, which is so pure—what servant could love it as I? Oh, thou wert—thou art, despised and rejected—meek and lowly! Yet thou, and thou only, knowest the holy precepts of thy Father in remembrance for ever and ever, confessing and manifesting righteousness to be everlasting, and his law the only; that law which Jesus, and Jesus only, of all have ever trodden this earth, could fulfil in every word and tittle, being the holy law of God, which is true, and no lie. Who but Jesus could fulfil it, in all holiness and purity, running in the way of his Father's commandments? Jesus is the way of reconciliation—the way of access to God for guilty sinners; that truth Jesus came upon earth to unravel, to lay open, to make manifest that which had been hidden for ages. Trouble and anguish did indeed hold of thee—"Was there ever sorrow like unto thy sorrow?" And yet to fulfil thy Father's commandments was thy delight. Yes, Lord Jesus, thou knowest thy Father's righteous testimonies were from everlasting, for he testified with an oath, "Thou art a Father for ever"—he gave thee understanding that thou shouldst live—thou wert the first-born from the dead—thou hast life for evermore—thou art the life, thou givest eternal life to all whom the Father giveth thee. Jesus, the Way, the Truth, the Life! can the blessed truth be too often meditated upon? No, my soul; behold in Jesus a fulness inexpressible—a way, that those who are therein, though fools, shall not find—a way inaccessible to a world lying in wickedness—a way over which his redeemed alone can pass—a fountain of life inexhaustible; he giveth life to the dead in trespasses and sins; yea, he will raise the

dead bodies which have died in him, and make them like unto his glorious body, and so shall they be for ever with their Lord. My soul, is this joy to be thine? Has the Lord been pleased to make thy calling and election sure to thyself? and art thou as one waiting for thy Lord, that whether he come at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning, thou mayest not be found sleeping? Therefore he saith, "What I say unto thee I say unto all, watch." Even so, come Lord Jesus.

MARCH 28.—*Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation.*—ISAIAH xxviii. 16.

What is the foundation of Zion—what the foundation of a sinner's hope—what the foundation of the saint's rest—what the foundation of the sinner's glory—what the foundation of the everlasting songs of triumph of the heavenly Jerusalem, the Church of the first-born, the general assembly which are written in heaven, the Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the kingdom which cannot be moved? What saith the Lord God? "Behold I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." And what saith the Lord Jesus Christ? "Upon this Rock (himself) I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And what saith my soul, while meditating on this glorious portion of Scripture? It is too vast for the mind to embrace it, too comprehensive for language to express it in half its glory. Faith would, in silent reverence, lock up the mind in contemplation, and have but one word to rest on the soul. "Jesus"

is all that the eye of faith seeth. Here is all fulness—here is the tried stone, the precious stone, the foundation-stone, the corner-stone, the top stone, the middle stone, to unite sinners to God ; the sure foundation, which cannot be moved, which Satan cannot root up, which sin cannot destroy, which rebellion cannot frustrate. “Jesus,” I would meditate upon thee, speak of thee, rest on thee, glory in thee, follow thee, obey thee, love thee, worship thee, as the Saviour of sinners—the image of the Father—the fulness of the Godhead—the advocate of man—the sure foundation of all peace, joy, comfort, in this life, and the procurer of everlasting felicity, in thy holy presence, in that which is to come, for all who are built upon that Rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.

MARCH 29.—*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus, so walk ye in him ; rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*—COL. ii. 6, 7.

After meditating upon the eternal stability of the “Rock of ages,” what can be more appropriate than an admonitory portion ? And does not my soul confess the continual need we have, of line upon line, precept upon precept, of being “put in remembrance of these things, to be ‘stirred up?’” What does the apostle say to the Church ? “As ye have received Christ Jesus, so walk ye in him ;” not *put* him on by profession, or baptism, not “having the form, but denying the power”—not “drawing nigh with the lips when the heart is far from him”—not crying, “Lord, Lord,” while in works they deny him ; but, “as ye have received him”—received him by the Spirit’s power,

being new creatures in Christ Jesus; having "put off the old man," being "born of incorruptible seed;" having "passed from death unto life"—"*so walk ye in him,*" "rooted and built up in him;" that sure foundation; "stablished in the faith, abounding therein with thanksgiving." Oh, my soul, well may admiration fill thy new creation! With deep humility I would meditate on the hindrances of the flesh, in "running the race set before thee," according to the admonitions contained in the word of God. "Rooted in him!" "Flesh of his flesh, bone of his bone;" growing up in him a holy temple to the Lord; built up in him—settled, grounded in the faith—not to be moved away from the hope of the gospel—abounding yes, abounding therein with thanksgiving. "Rejoice alway, and again I say rejoice!" "Be careful for nothing, but in *everything*, by prayer, with thanksgiving, make known your requests unto God." Oh, that my soul might learn a lesson this day How halting thy walk; how unstable thy faith! how unbelieving thy heart! how slow, how imperfect is thanksgiving!

Blessed Spirit! visit thy Church generally—visit her members individually—visit the ministers of the word of life particularly, that her priests may be strong to labour, stirring up the minds of her children, that they may bring forth fruit a hundred fold, to the praise of him who *hath* redeemed them walking in Jesus as they have received him; abounding therein with thanksgiving, as they have received of him; supplicating the aid of that Spirit who alone can enable them to walk in lowliness of mind in that holy vocation whereunto we are called
Amen and Amen.

MARCH 30.—*The Lord is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.*—PSALM cxlv. 8.

How is my soul impressed with the text offered for thy meditation this day! Lord, with a deep sense of the exceeding sinfulness of a vile polluted body! A wretched sinner, deserving nothing at thy hands but eternal banishment from thy presence, and feeling the *reality* of deserved wrath and condemnation, may truly read these precious words, with wonder, with humility, with praise. To whom, O my soul, is “the Lord gracious, and *full* of compassion, *slow* to anger, and of *great* mercy?” “The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.” “Thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, but thy saints shall bless thee, speak of thy kingdom, thy glory, thy power.”

It is the sinner to whom sin has been revealed by the Holy Spirit—the sinner to whom pardon has been applied by the blood of Jesus—the sinner in whom the Spirit of adoption has been wrought—the sinner in whose heart the love of the Father has been shed abroad—the sinner who can say, *my* Father, *my* Saviour, “My Lord and my God”—that can feel, in any degree, the force, the blessedness of these words. A miserable sinner to *feel* that the Lord is gracious; that he is full, yea, *full* of compassion to the chief of sinners; that he is *slow* to anger to the continual, the daily, nay, the hourly transgressor, and of great mercy to a rebellious child! Oh, my soul, is there not cause for wonder at the infinite goodness of an infinitely holy God; a cause for humility to a sensible sinner—dust and ashes—*whose every breath is polluted, whose every*

deed is tainted with sin ; a cause for praise—
 for a sinner redeemed—a sinner justified—a
 reconciled—a sinner far off drawn nigh unto
 and, O my soul, a rebellious sinner brought to
 a Father, a Saviour, a Comforter, and God
 a sinner brought to acknowledge its own infiniteness,
 a Saviour's infinite strength—a sinner brought
 to see, to feel, to know, that were not the
 gracious, full of compassion, slow to anger,
 great mercy, the soul is lost, for ever lost, and
 the body, raised at the last day, must be cast
 hell by him who hath the power over all things
 heaven and in earth ? “ Praise the Lord, O Lord
 and all that is within me bless his holy
 Hallelujah, praise ye the Lord !

Jesus, my Lord, my Saviour, and my King !
 Let earth, let heaven, let men, let angels sing
 Thy praise—all else be mute—nor voices raise
 Another sound, but praise, eternal praise
 To Jesus ! Holy, holy Lamb of God !
 Who wash'd and cleans'd such sinners with his blood

MARCH 31.—*And to her was granted that she
 be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white ;
 fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*—REV

Thy meditation to-day gives, my soul, the
 results of the portion upon which we meditated
 day. Yes, it was the everlasting love of the
 Father by which he was pleased to select, from sinful
 serving man, a remnant upon whom to show his
 and to bestow his grace. And who are they, who
 are they saved from the penalty of sin, and
 restored to the favour of God ? Lo, I look on the
 right hand and on the left—I look above, below—
within, without—I read the word of God—I

the work of creation—I mark his providence, and one object appears as the centre point of all my reflections—Jesus, the beginning, the end of all ! But, O my soul, great and glorious as he is, by whom, and for whom all things subsist, yet the text brings thee to meditate upon his gracious acts. Who are they who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb ? Are they not the Lamb's wife, the chosen of the Father, the living members of Christ's mystical body ? Jesus who hath saved, and given himself for them, that he might present them to himself, pure and spotless, a chaste virgin, a bride made meet for his kingdom. She is not only saved by Jesus, and washed by his precious sin-atonement blood, but she is arrayed in fine linen ; and what is the fine linen ? It is the righteousness of saints ; and what is the righteousness of saints ? Ah, my soul, it is a better righteousness than thy sinful nature could procure for itself ; it is that which is perfect, which can never fail, which is accepted by, and with which the Father is well pleased—it is the righteousness of Jesus. He has clothed his bride, the Church, with the robe of righteousness wrought by his own merits ; he has made her comely in his comeliness ; she is brought to submit to his righteousness, and no longer goes about to establish her own. How pure, how holy, how glorious, how perfect, how lasting, is the seamless robe of Jesus, for, O my soul, it is the righteousness of God ! Perfect holiness, unerring obedience, belongs not to fallen man—no, not even when renewed by the Holy Spirit. God's strict justice demands unerring obedience, and his pure eye perfect purity. Jesus, God and man, can alone reconcile God to man, and bring man nigh to God ; Jesus alone, by the power of the eternal Spirit,

reconciles man to God; and, oh, rapturous thought! when Jesus has put all enemies under his feet, arrayed in fine linen (the pure, the holy garments of their Lord), the saints shall come forth a numerous army, a great multitude, "as the voice of many waters and mighty thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!'" Oh, let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him who alone is worthy—worthy of all honour, and eternal praise. And again they said, Alleluia! blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb! Amen, alleluia!

APRIL.

APRIL 1.—*Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*—ROM. i. 3, 4.

This portion of God's most holy word appears to my soul in sweet combination with the two preceding meditations—the mercy of God to, and the work of Jesus for, his Church. In these words of the apostle the human and divine nature of the ever-blessed Jesus rests upon the mind, and shows me what could only have been done by God; and what could not have been done but by man. But it is not the *word* of redemption into which my soul is led, but to the "*Word* which was made flesh and dwelt among us." He "who was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead." What a subject for the

meditation! comprehensive enough to fill pages, but brief must be thy words, for "noon-day" lasteth not long; and a few words, resting *in the heart*, may be more for thy soul's profit, if applied by the Spirit, than volumes unassisted by this Almighty Teacher.

See Jesus born as man—living as man—walking as man—dying as man; see him acting as God—rising as God—forgiving sins—healing the sick—raising the dead—and, at last, by his own power, raising himself, as he declared, "No man taketh it (my life) from me: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again." Made of the seed of David—declared to be the Son of God—man, to feel our infirmities—God, to forgive our sins; blessed union! God revealing himself in Jesus Christ, that Christ might be in the believer, the hope of glory—taking the nature of man to be a substitute for man—retaining the holiness of God, to perform a perfect obedience, and to offer a sinless and pure sacrifice—Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness, *by* the resurrection from the dead; Jesus dying—rising—ever living, to make continual intercession for all who come to God by him; Jesus in his two-fold nature remaineth "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The Man in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt could not see corruption, and must live for ever.

God, in his essential deity, his divine essence, can never be beheld—"no man can approach unto." In Jesus God and man meet—by him a rebellious sinner is reconciled to God—in him a polluted creature is made holy—through him a way of access is opened to a throne of mercy, and a sinner finds favour with God. In Jesus a sinner can approach God and live. Amazing grace! No longer a consuming fire,

but a reconciled Father ; no longer the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of adoption. God beholds reconciled sinner in Jesus—the sinner, in Jesus, holds his God. What a mystery, O my soul ! and a most blessed reality to the new-born creature, who is felt, tasted, and handled by the Spirit's power in the soul, and sweetly realized in the experience though not comprehensible to man's finite understanding. But, my soul, whatsoever the Holy Spirit hath revealed is enough for thee to know ; and if thou hast been quickened into newness of life, and hast had the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent, revealed unto thee—if thou hast been made partaker of the divine nature, as Jesus has been made partaker of thy nature, to bear thy sins—if thou canst call God *thy Father*, through Jesus Christ, “Son of God,” oh, rejoice, rejoice ! with deep humiliation and self-abasement, let Jesus be highly exalted for as thou dost receive the benefits of his birth, death, his resurrection, so shalt thou be raised in triumph, and reign with Jesus for ever and ever. “Let, then, the love of Christ constrain thee” in all thy ways, and, with submission to the will of the Lord in all things, give continual praise to the eternal Trinity in unity. Amen.

APRIL 2.—*There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord. The horse is prepared against the day of battle ; but safety is of the Lord.*
—PROV. xxi. 30, 31.

To Solomon was given great wisdom, and we are assured he was divinely taught ; it was the “wisdom that cometh from above,” which made him record that *there is* “no wisdom nor counsel against the Lord.”

And what, my soul, has the Lord taught thee? He has taught that there is no contending against the Almighty, whose will is absolute, and his ways past finding out; there is no wisdom of man that can frustrate God's designs; his understanding cannot search into the vast and hidden mysteries of creation and providence; nor can the counsel of all the mighty men of earth stay, for one moment, the hand which is directing all things after the counsel of his own will. Again, the wise man saith, "The horse is prepared for the day of battle; but safety is of the Lord." Again, we view other inspired writers, confirming the words of Solomon, "A horse is a vain thing for safety, and his strength shall no man prevail." "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." Safety is of the Lord! Yes, my soul, thou mayest look into the kingdoms of providence and grace, and thou wilt see that man cannot set aside the unerring will of Jehovah in either.

God's providences are fixed and immutable; and so are his gracious acts: "He will have mercy upon whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth," so that safety is of the Lord, both in providence and grace. The horse may be prepared for the battle, the armies may be arrayed for war, but Israel's God can overcome Israel's foes, and cause Israel to remain in safety; so also in the kingdom of grace, safety is of the Lord; and my soul truly believes that in the Lord alone is safety. What a precious little word is this 'safety!' Oh, to feel the reality of safety from sin, from the world, from the flesh, from the devil! safety from all evil, from terror, from careflessness, from enemies—dwelling safely under the shadow of his wings. The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the

righteous runneth into it and is safe ; ” and is he not a strength to the poor, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall ? ” Is there not safety here, my soul ? Oh, mark it well, that safety is of the Lord, whose providence is over all his works, for many dwell in safety, live in safety, die in safety, crying, peace, peace to themselves, when there is no eternal peace for them ; eternal safety is alone treasured up in Jesus for those who are righteous in the sight of the Father, by the righteousness of the Son—not the righteous in their own eyes. In Jesus they are safe from the just wrath of the Almighty—Jesus, the Rock, the hiding-place, the refuge of his people ; here they are in safety amid all the storms and quicksands of this mortal life. Trust ye not, then, my soul, in arms of flesh and creature-helps ; remember, oh, continually remember, that safety is of the Lord !

APRIL 3.—*The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.*—PSALM ix. 9.

What an appropriate portion of Scripture to succeed our last meditation ! It comes to my soul as sweetly confirming the leadings of the mind in so resting, and ending with the *safety* of the Lord.

What blessed promises are contained in these few words ! Enough, truly, to animate and cheer the drooping spirit. And observe the *positive* form of the promise—“ The Lord *will* be a refuge ; ” then why, my soul, art thou ever cast down ? Alas, it is the unbelief of an evil heart ; there is all fulness in the Lord and his word—there is daily food, and continual food for the Spirit-taught soul ; but it must hunger *after* righteousness, to feed and feast upon the

venly provision. O Lord, thou art a refuge at all
 es—under all circumstances! thou never failest,
 deceivest; the treacherous hearts of thy people
 der from thee continually, but when oppressed,
 l in trouble, where do they run? They feel there
 o help but in thee. And what does the psalmist
 in the succeeding portion—oh, precious assurance!
 used experience!—"And they that know thy name
 s, *know*, not merely by hearsay, but *heart* know-
 ge) *will* put their trust in thee." Oh, yes, yes,
 l put their trust in thee! And why? "For thou,
 rd, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." Lord,
 e is truth! No, no, thou hast not, in times past,
 ler trials and troubles, forsaken them that have
 ght thee; nor wilt thou, at any future time; there-
 e they that *know* thy name, know something of thy
 hfulness, thy love, thy truth—they *will* put their
 st in thee. Thou hast loved thine own with an
 rlasting love, and thou wilt draw them, that they
 y run after thee—"Thou wilt keep them in perfect
 oe who are stayed upon thee." Thou wilt bring
 m into thy kingdom of grace, and afterwards re-
 re them to glory, for "thy sheep shall never
 ish;" those that seek thee shall find thee, and
 ere thou art they shall be also, to dwell with thee
 ever in everlasting peace. Praise, praise, to the
 nb that was slain! praise to all eternity!

IL 4.—*In the multitude of my thoughts within me
 thy comforts delight my soul.*—PSALM xciv. 19.

n a casket of precious gems there may be some
 n which the eye of the beholder may rest with
 ular pleasure; and amid the variety of sweets
 re may be some precious drops more exquisitely

gratifying to the palate; and is it not so with the Scriptures? a portion—a verse—a word, even sealed upon the soul with especial brightness and refreshing, shining into the heart with a lustre, as the vivid sun-beam reflected and softened on the calm blue bosom of the ocean. From this psalm my soul would fain cull that which is most sweetly applied; yet the distinction of the ungodly and the righteous must not pass unnoticed; and ponder well, and consider who hath made thee to differ. “The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.” Be humbled, O my soul, whilst thou mayest rejoice at the “blessedness of that man whom the Lord chasteneth and teacheth out of thy law.” Blessed promises are these for thy people, O Lord; thou wilt not cast them off nor forsake thine inheritance. The sweetest drops I would rest upon, for they are sweet to my taste; I would in *reality* meditate—to enjoy—pause over them, and seek that aid which alone can bring profit to the soul. “In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul,” is the first refreshing drop. Oh, precious cordial to the soul, loathing the corruptions of the old man—the Adam-nature! Oh, the comforts that are treasured up in the second Adam! without these the multitude within would make the soul despair. Then comes a second drop distilling on the soul, like “the morning dew,” rich, and full of sweetness, and such a comprehensive comfort as the soul can feast and feed upon, but which words cannot express—“But the Lord is my defence, and my God is the rock of my refuge.” Oh, precious faith, to realize this—to feel, at all times and seasons, that the Lord *is* my defence! What—who—can be feared? Not all

the powers of darkness, nor earth, nor hell! My God, too, the *rock* of my refuge! Blessed, precious Jesus! my Lord, my God! all, all in thee, the rock of my refuge, which cannot be moved. In thee are the comforts which delight my soul—refresh the inner man—strengthen the heart—quicken the understanding—enlighten the eyes, and cause the whole man to rejoice. Sweet and blessed, indeed, is the Spirit's application to the soul! Without this the word is dry, the promises unapplied, and neither joy nor peace; the understanding may assent, but no experimental feeling—no lively touch to the heart, unless applied by this divine power; but, blessed be the name of the Lord, his redeemed are secure in him, whether they realize the precious things or not; “the Lord is their defence,” though they see him not—“the rock of their refuge,” though they feel not his power. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

APRIL 5.—*How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?*—JOB vi. 25.

“How forcible are right words!” is indeed a truth which Job, a man of wisdom, uttered; but Job proves, in act, that right words do not infallibly produce the effect intended by fallible man. Job wrapped up in his self-righteousness, and determined, in his own strength, “not to let go his integrity,” became, under the influence of flesh, impatient at the reproofs of his intended comforters; he could not believe that they uttered “*right words*,” and exclaimed, “but what doth your arguing reprove?” But Job's friends argued well, reproved faithfully, uttered many right words; and yet Job made no self-application, nor were they forcible to him, therefore he

thinks they are not right words. How is my soul led to reflect upon, and to sovereignty of the Almighty! Job, the seer is brought to acknowledge his weakness—"abhor himself in dust and ashes"; when eye of faith, he seeth the Lord, which he somewhat different from having heard of hearing of the ear—then is Job humbled, receives double at the Lord's hands—the reproof for not having spoke right the *Lord* (ch. xlii. 7, 8).

What is the improvement my soul would these words? Blessed Spirit, I am persuaded thou apply, there is no force—unless thou there is no power. It is the sovereignty of Spirit my soul would meditate upon—his work, which no human power can effect: without his aid man's agency is of the creature may be made instrumental, but "right words," nor fair speeches, nor word—the truth itself—can take effect in a flinty heart, to receive that truth to the soul, without the power of the Spirit Lord: in *this*, does the force of right words in God's gracious acts; the eyes are blinded in true light, the ears are dull in hearing the heart remains "unimpressed and cold," the Spirit quickens into newness of life; by application, "right words" do indeed become forcible—so forcible that man cannot remain unconvinced of sin, he abhors himself in dust—his eyes opened, he sees the true light, the face of Christ Jesus, and can say, "*eye seeth thee*;" the Spirit takes of the

Jesus, and shows them to the believing soul. Precious, precious is the eye of faith! the spiritual understanding—the circumcised ear, which receive Jesus to the saving of the soul! Blessed, blessed Spirit, by whose power “right words” become forcible—the truth received in the love of it—God, through Jesus Christ is worshipped, adored, and served, in spirit and in truth; and the soul experiencing the force of right words, by the application of the Spirit, can exclaim, with holy joy, all praise and glory be to THEE, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.” Eternal Three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Amen.

APRIL 6.—*My beloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies.*—SONG ii. 16.

What but the Spirit of God, the sovereign power, upon which my soul has been so recently meditating, could bring such sweetness, comfort, joy, peace, to one stricken by sin, condemned by God’s holy word, feeling the desperate wickedness of the heart, and writhing under the sense of actual transgression? And can a denier of God’s word, a rejecter of the holy Jesus, now say, “My beloved is mine, and I am his?” and not only say, but believe—not only believe, but *feel*? Lord Jesus, that a guilty sinner has been brought to repentance—has been led to Calvary, to the foot of the cross—has had thy precious blood applied to the guilty conscience, and received pardon—has been raised to thy bosom, by thy justifying righteousness; is it not by the power of thy Holy Spirit? Can anything but the spirit of holiness—a new creation—a new man—being born from above—cause a convicted sinner to cry, “My beloved is

mine, and I am his ? ” The rejected Jesus to be my beloved ; and not only so, but, in faith, to be that *I am his* ? Oh, blessed application ! does my heart ever cease to feel—my tongue cease to praise ? why do the wonders of redeeming love ever quit my thoughts ? why is not the *Grace* continually glorified ? Lord, thou hast “ The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak ; thou knowest thy disciples often sleep when should be praying and watching—thou knowest infirmities of the flesh and art not an exacting master, but a loving Lord, and compassionate Priest. Thou hast loved thy people “ with an lasting love,” drawest them with loving-kindness and lookest for obedience, not sacrifice : they love thee because thou first loved them ; and they give a willing service of love, emanating from the adoption given, and not a slavish offering of sacrifice and stated feasts ; and “ thou feedest as the lilies ”—lillies of thine own planting—pure in purity—nourished and cherished by thyself, that may grow up a holy temple, for thy dwelling-place !

And can my soul say in truth, “ My beloved mine, and I am his ? ” Humbling, transposing thought ! Blessed faith, to be enabled to “ lay down the hope set before us ! ” Lord help me to love and to pray, lest I enter into temptation ! Aid me continually by thy Spirit during this time-state when thou hast re-clothed me with my resurrection body, to live through an eternity, unsinful and undying,

Triumphant and eternal shouts,
From all thy ransom'd race,
Shall hail thee King of kings, and Lord of lords !
Abounding love shall be their theme,
And grace—free sovereign grace !

APRIL 7.—*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.*—ROM. viii. 18.

How blessedly do portions of Scripture, at times, come in upon the soul, as it were, in consecutive links, leading the mind into a sweet combination, so that a chain of gospel truths start into view unexpectedly and unintentionally; thus am I led to consider this day's meditation, combining with the two former, having been carried on, step by step, unconsciously, from the Spirit's power, to the work of grace; from this, to the love of Jesus, and the hope of glory; and now, my soul, thou art led, by the words of the apostle, from the *hope* to the contemplation of the "glory that *shall* be revealed in us," with which the apostle "reckoned the sufferings of the present time were not worthy to be compared." The apostle "counted all things but dung, that he might win Christ;" and here he reckons the sufferings nothing in comparison to the glory awaiting us. The Church at all times is in a suffering state on this earth; but it is with the Church generally as it is with the members individually—not the same suffering in degree: the Church in the apostle's time was under much persecution, and Paul was in greater peril than all his brethren—yet he reckons it not to be compared to the anticipated glory—the glory that *shall* be revealed in us; and of this we can form no just idea—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, what Jesus has prepared for them that love him—neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive;" but it is a glory prepared for the redeemed, of which they shall partake for ever and ever—a glory which cannot exist with *sin* and death—which cannot be

independent of God—which cannot be enjoyed from Christ—which can only be comprehended by a spiritual capacity; a glory purchased and obtained through death, secured by right and in due time to be revealed in the future through faith, do believe in Him who has secured and prepared this unspeakable glory: succeeding grace, and enduring through eternity in the presence of Jesus, who is all in all! shout grace and glory! A sinner saved by grace, a sinner led to glory! To Jesus be the praise

APRIL 8.—*Wherefore gird up the loins of ye, be sober and hope to the end for the grace that shall be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*
—1 PET. i. 13.

Having been meditating on the glories of redemption—the work of the Spirit—the fulness of grace—the sovereignty of grace—the blessedness of the new creation—my soul is brought to a sweet admonition, conveyed through one who was privileged to see our Lord face to face; one who once manifested the weakness of the flesh from whose eyes flowed tears of bitterness at the look of his denied Lord; one who became the influence of the Holy Ghost, strong and valiant for the faith delivered to him, and who cheerfully suffered death for the cause of his Lord, proving that his words, “Lord, thou hast said that I love thee,” were not vain words. Oh soul meditate for profit on the words recorded for the benefit of the Church till the end of time, to behoove the individual members of Christ’s body to attend. “Called with a holy calling

t Jesus," should not thy life, conduct, and
 tion manifest whose thou art, and whom thou

Holy Spirit, help thy people, whom thou
 akened into newness of life, help them in this
 of declension, to gird up the loins of their
 buckle on the whole armour of faith, and,
 ff in hand, stand ready for the summons,
 from the cold hand of death, or the trump that
 claim the approach of the Lord—"Be sober,
 sh unto prayer, and hope to the end;" and are
 alled upon to be "as obedient children, not
 ng yourselves according to the former lusts in
 orance?" Oh, my soul, is it not thy desire
 dient to such a loving and forbearing Father;
 thy daily petition to be delivered from all the
 ties of the old man, "the lust of the flesh,
 of the eyes, and the pride of life;" to walk
 creature—to prove that old things are passed
 ot to be conformed to this world, but to be
 ned by the renewing of the mind—to be holy
 rsation, setting the Lord continually before
 o is all holiness—to be wholly sacred to God
 d thyself a vessel of mercy, fitted for the
 use—to be found mortifying the deeds of the
 d living in the Spirit? Thou, Holy Spirit,
 rk all in thy people of grace—thou must carry
 ork thou hast begun; and, precious promise!
 t subdue our iniquities, as they are blotted out
 e Father's view, for Jesus shall have a people
 him. Oh, for an abundant outpouring of the
 irit upon the sheep of thy pasture, that they
 ow their Shepherd in holy meekness, lowli-
 heart, and abounding love!

APRIL 9.—*Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?*
—JOHN xi. 25, 26.

There is one thing happeneth to all—the king, the beggar—the rich, the poor—the young, the old—the sinner and the saint—all, all must pay the penalty of sin; death, the chilly hand of death, will inevitably come upon all flesh—earth shall receive the victims of disobedience—dust shall return to dust—flesh must see corruption—the life of man is brief at the longest, but we know not how short it may be; then why all this toiling, care, and anxiety for the things of earth, death comes at last—dreaded by some, welcomed by others, to some indifferent—some view him peacefully, others with horror; many are warned, year after year, yet heed it not—to many he comes in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; for this some are prepared, and ready to depart—others, alas! have lived as if they should never die, and are launched into eternity with all their unpardoned sins to answer for.

My soul, here is a solemn meditation for thee—thou canst not lightly pass it over. How is this last enemy viewed in thy thoughts! how stands thy account? where is the vast debt of thy sins? Death is no stranger to thy mind—he often comes before thine inner eye. Art thou prepared to meet his cold grasp? Hast thou not, for many a year, been warned? How art thou accoutred to receive him; Dost thou view him with terror or delight—does he appear a grim visitant, or a kindly messenger of hope and joy? My soul, what says the portion on

which thou art meditating? Believest thou in Jesus? dost thou believe in his word—in his work of redemption—in his power to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him—hast thou on the whole armour of faith—has the glorious garment of salvation, the righteousness of Jesus, been thrown over thee, “to hide thy transgressions” from the sight of a holy God—hast thou, when dead, been made alive? Then look again and again at what Jesus saith—“Whosoever liveth and believeth in me *shall never die.*” No, thine immortal part shall live for ever. The sting of death is lost in the resurrection of Jesus, who giveth the victory to all who are made alive—then are they brought to believe in him who is the resurrection and the life. Oh, my soul, thou knowest not what a day may bring forth! Death may not permit thee to write another meditation; but if faith hold on thou wilt meet him without dismay. Blessed be his name, he has gotten the victory—his word is yea and amen—his promise is sure, and he will safely keep all whom the Father hath given to him. Let the eye be ever directed to Jesus—he is faithful—he is true—he alone is worthy—he ever liveth, and will come again to receive his own—his sheep, which can never perish. “Oh, grave, where is thy victory? oh, death, where is thy sting?” Jesus has overcome all enemies, and will lead thee safely through the dark valley. Fear not death, for Jesus is thy life; nay wilt thou not welcome death, which will release thee from a sinful world, a sinful body, and bring thee into the presence of him whom thou lovest—bring thee to thy haven of rest? “Lord, increase my faith, and help my unbelief”—keep me by thy Spirit ever looking unto thee, then shall I

leave all things in thy hands; and whether death comes to-day or to-morrow, it matters not; verily it shall be well with the righteous—with all who, spiritually, believe in Jesus. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord!” Amen and Amen.

APRIL 10.—*Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*—1 THESS. i. 3, 4.

What a blessed state is here described for the Church militant! what an encouragement to the pastor of a flock! how encouraging to the people! “Remembering,” said the apostle, “without ceasing, your work of faith,” &c. Oh, what an exemplification of the glorious gospel! Where shall we find, in this our day, such a body of Christians, such a teacher, such an overseer? Alas, alas! where are the apostolic times—the one not ceasing to remember the spiritual acts of the other? My soul, what is this work of faith, this labour of love, this patience of hope? It is enough for thee to meditate upon morning noon and night; and perhaps then thou couldest say but little of these acts touching the Thessalonians, and as little respecting the present times; but, blessed be God, there is, and ever shall be to the end of time, a work of faith going on, a labour of love continued, a patience of hope not worn out, among the Lord’s people; the kingdom of grace cannot be entered without the work of faith to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—gracious acts cannot be performed to the glory of God but by the love of Christ constraining; and to those who sigh and cry

or all the abominations done within the city, is not the patience of hope exercised—the patient waiting for, and earnest expectation of, the coming of our Lord the second time, to take his great power, and to reign on the earth? Oh, my soul, may this patience of hope be continually in exercise! May the Holy Spirit shine into the hearts of the true Israel—helping their faith, constraining their love, keeping their patience. “*Knowing* your election of God,” saith the apostle. How fully was the work of grace manifested to the discerning Paul in his “*brethren beloved.*” To be known of God is assuredly the chief concern; but how comforting—how cheering—how sweet—how blessed, to *know* each other! the pastor to know the true sheep—for these to know their election of God—the brethren not to stand in doubt of each other. Lord, send pastors after thine own heart! Give thy Spirit to discern the precious from the vile—to take “the chaff from the wheat,” that the work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope, may be truly made manifest among thy election of grace; and help my soul, O Lord, on in this waste wilderness! For what arm of flesh can give the graces of the Spirit! what power but thine can restore thy Church from her declension? Help us to pray for thy appearing, and to watch with patience, in faith and love, for the accomplishment of thy will. Oh, give honour, and glory, and praise, to God and our Saviour Jesus Christ!

APRIL 11.—Twenty-second chapter of Ezekiel,
26th, 27th, and 28th verses.

“He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches;” and that the Spirit speaks through a *feeble vessel*, directs the mind, and guides

the hand that writes, my soul is bound to believe. Our last portion of Scripture showed the blessed state of apostolic times; but my soul was forcibly led to view the heart-rending contrast of the present Christianity, among priests and people; and what does this day's text present to the mind? Has not the visible Church retrograded to the position of Israel of old? My heart is pained to the quick, and what the mournful prophet I would say, "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" Oh, my soul, what are the sanctuaries of the land—what are the priests, among the few names even in Sardis, that have not defiled their garments? Do not the many violate God's law, profane his holy things? Do they put a difference between the holy and profane—the unclean and the clean? Are not the princes in the midst thereof like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain? and, oh, her prophets—what are her prophets; are they not daubing her people with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, dividing lies unto them, saying, "Thus saith the Lord God when the Lord hath not spoken?" But blessed be God for the few names which are left—the few faithful witnesses remaining—the few true disciples of the Lord and Master, who boldly preach Christ crucified and proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus—who blow the gospel trumpet with a certain sound, sound the alarm and warn, exhort, and rebuke! False prophets multiply, Peace, peace, but "the Spirit saith unto the Churches, the last days, the perilous times are come;" but hold up your heads, ye faithful, for your redemption draweth nigh; and, O my soul, here is

nevertheless !—" *Nevertheless*, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his ;" and "in a great house there are vessels of gold and of silver, of wood and of earth—some to honour and some to dishonour." Now, my soul, for the exercise of the patience of hope ; thy Lord is at the helm, and will guide his heaven-bound, Spirit-fraught vessel safely into port. The lies of the false prophets shall return upon their own heads. They may daub with their untempered mortar, but it will not stand, it shall be swept away with the besom of destruction, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from his presence, and the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe in that day. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." Amen—even so, come Lord Jesus !

APRIL 12.—*I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.*—PSALM lxvi. 17, and two following verses.

Come, my soul, and dry thy weeping eyes—leave the public sanctuaries, and come into the closet of thine own heart, that sanctuary known only to God—yea, known *only* to God ; for thyself knoweth not the half that lieth there : but thou canst declare what God hath done for thy soul, and ye that fear the Lord come and hear. Thou didst cry under a sense of sin in the bitterness of repentance—then the pardoning love of *Jesus was manifested* unto thee ; and was he

not extolled with thy tongue—couldst thou his wondrous acts of mercy and of love—couldst thou not speak good of his name, morning, noon—when thou sawest iniquity in thy heart regard it? No, no, for then the Lord would have heard thee; but verily he did hear thee, and he answered the voice of thy prayer. He set my feet in a new way, and gave me bread from heaven to eat—his precious word, that I might feel the sting of sin, that I might behold his precious Son, full of grace and truth; and he hath brought me out of darkness into the light, and hath departed from iniquity. He hath brought me many a day's journey; and, my soul, dost thou still cry unto him, and is he not still extolling thee with his tongue—dost thou not detest iniquity in thine heart—and doth not thy God still hear the voice of thy prayer? Jesus, thou art more needful (if I may so express it) than ever! Through thee all blessings flow—by thee acceptance is found at the door of mercy—the love of God flows into our hearts, and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, he quickens the hearts of thy people, and the labour of the saints is made sweet savour to the soul; a delight to serve thee, a desire to obey and follow thee—to fight the good fight of faith, and run the race, ever looking unto thee, O thou blessed author and finisher of all!

APRIL 13.—*Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from the company of men, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil for the Son of Man's sake.*—LUKE 6:22

My soul is again led to the declaration of the Lord, yes, the spiritual worshippers of Zion, who bear this blessed mark of faithfulness to their li-

Here are the words of the Lord himself, "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, separate you from their company—persecute you—cast out your name as evil, *for the Son of Man's sake.*" Lord, thy Church is not in this blessed state; Zion is at ease, putting far away the evil day, and causing the seat of violence to come near, lying upon beds of ivory, stretching upon couches, eating the lambs out of the flock and the calves out of the stalls, chanting to the sound of the viol, inventing to themselves instruments of music, drinking wine in bowls, anointing with the chief ointments, but are not grieved for the affliction of Zion. O Zion, the beasts of prey are come unto thy sanctuaries! but thou seest not, thou hearest not, thou heedest not. But ere long the blessed times of persecution must come; yes, blessed to the mourners in Zion—blessed to the Lord's own people, for he saith, when these times come upon ye, "Rejoice, and leap for joy, for behold your reward is great in heaven." Lord, thy will be done! thy purposes shall be accomplished, and in thine own time thou wilt sift Zion, and thou wilt keep thy people safe in the clefts of the Rock. Oh, my soul, pray for the prosperity of Zion! Lord, give thy people the spirit of supplication, that we may be more faithful unto thee—take up thy cross and follow thee—forsake all for thee—bear all for thee—leave all with thee—rest all upon thee—give all to thee—rejoice only in thee! and in possessing thee, we possess all that can make life truly happy, and death unutterably joyful. Grant that we may not fear man, who can only destroy the body; but fear thee only, who hath power over body and soul, with a godly fear, and love thee with a holy love, accounting it a blessed privilege to suffer for thy sake!

APRIL 14.—*O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved: how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee.*—JER. iv. 14.

O Jerusalem, here is an appeal to the Holy City and again my soul is brought to the Church, in this our day, and would make an appeal to the invisible members of the visible Church. "O Jerusalem wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved!" Oh, partake not of the iniquities of the professing Church! Come out, separate and wash yourselves from the pollutions and carnality which are crept into the holy places—and they are become "cages of every unclean bird;" wash thine heart, and be faithful to the Lord thy God, that thou mayest be saved from self-contrition in the day of calamity—saved from fears and terrors, when the devouring scourge comes into the visible temples; "wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved from doubts of thy interest in the blood and righteousness of Jesus—"How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" Lord, until the walls are levelled with the dust; while the earthly tabernacle remains, vain thoughts come by crowds into the heart, which should be wholly thy sanctuary; thou, Lord, must come with thy scourge, and send the unclean away, overturn the tables of the money-changers, for *thy* love is not to be bought—and the tables of those who sell doves, for there are no more sacrifices needed. Save thy people who trust in thee—save them from peril—save them from sin—save them from self! My soul, look unto Jesus, for all thy salvation, in time and for eternity, is secured in him. The heavenly Jerusalem is safe, and shall be glorified; but on earth trials and tribulation await every living stone, every joint,

every vessel of the Holy City—be faithful unto death, and in due time thou shalt have thy crown of life, for Jesus' sake.

APRIL 15.—*On the eighth day he sent the people away : and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.*—1 KINGS viii. 66.

If Israel of old could so rejoice at the completion and dedication of an earthly temple, how should my soul rejoice at faith's view of the temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens! They rejoiced from sight, thou rejoicest through faith—they beheld a magnificent earthly temple, thou a glorious heavenly one—they saw the ark deposited in the most holy place, with the two tables of the law; they rejoiced to see the kingdom of David established in Solomon, his son, and they offered multitudes of sacrifices, and feasted with their king, and went to their tents joyful and glad of heart—thou seest Jesus, entered once for all into the holiest of holies, having made an all-sufficient sacrifice for the sins of all his people: thou seest a kingdom established for eternity by a greater than Solomon; thou seest the tables of stone, the law-covenant, broken in pieces, so that not a particle can appear against thee; thou seest a better covenant, brought in by thy Law-fulfiller—the gospel covenant of peace and glad tidings; thou seest a temple which cannot be thrown down by enemies, which will not decay by time—a King without infirmity—a Priest to live for ever, and to make continual intercession. My soul, thou seest, by faith, Jesus—the fulness of the Father, the Head of his Church, the King of his

people, the Shepherd of his flock, the Saviour of sinners, the leader to glory—and canst thou not go into thy tent joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness the Lord hath done for *thy soul*, and for all his people Israel, his spiritual seed?

Come then, ye sinners, come to Israel's King,
A broken heart and contrite spirit bring.
Come poor, he'll feed—come naked, he'll array
In glorious robes, and cast your rags away.
Joyful and glad of heart you then shall be,
And Jesus bless through an eternity.

APRIL 16.—*And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.*
—2 THESS. iii. 5.

What a substance is embodied in these few words of the great apostle of the Gentiles, what a heavenly and fervent breathing for the Church he addressed. Oh, that the same Holy Spirit would breathe the same prayer into his called ministers, and called people! and, my soul, that thou couldst, with the fervency of the Spirit, breathe it too for thyself and thy brethren—that the “Lord would direct our hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ.” What knowledge hast thou, my soul, of the love of God to *thee*, and of *thy* love to God? The one is infinite, passing knowledge—the other too feeble to be named. But something of the love of God is known in the gift of his dear Son for guilty sinners—the depth we can never fathom, in time. Does not my soul feel somewhat of love, though it be feeble, for this precious gift? And does not this little love incline thine heart to hate sin, love holiness, God's word and ways. Oh, for more, abundantly more, of the love of God in my heart, the patient waiting for Christ! and that “the

Lord of peace himself may give us peace always, by all means." When Jesus giveth peace, it is a peace indeed—not as the world giveth; when Jesus smiles, let all the world deride. Love is the substance of the gospel, for "God is love;" patience, the exercise of faith, springing forth from the root of love; and peace, a blessed fruit, bestowed by the Lord himself, which, as derived from him, must rest in him, and then not all the enemies of thy soul leagued together can take the precious heavenly gift away. Lord Jesus, look upon thy Zion—give that peace which flows from love to thee—help us patiently to wait for thy glorious coming, that we may be found watching at thy gates, and waiting with fervent expectation, to "see thee as thou art," and to be with thee for ever.

APRIL 17.—*Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?*—JER. xii. 1.

There seemeth a sweet and holy familiarity in the prophet's address to the God of his fathers; an acknowledgment of the righteousness of the Lord, and that he was accustomed to plead with him—"Yet let me talk to thee of thy judgments," of thy ways, which often, to frail man, appear mysterious. What doth my soul gather from these words of the prophet? The gospel, under the New Testament dispensation, fully answers the prophet's queries. The believer in Jesus—the soldier of the cross—the follower of the Lamb, must, in this world, have tribulation. This is *not the saint's rest*—but "the way of the wicked

prosper, and they are happy who deal very treacherously." "The Lord hath planted them in this world—yea, they take root, they grow—yea, they bring forth fruit." Yes, here are those who are within the pale of the Christian Church, for the prophet saith, "Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins." For what purpose do they flourish, and what fruit do they bring forth? They help to build the ark, but the fruit they bring forth is unto themselves.

My soul, examine thyself; hast thou been planted by the power of the Holy Spirit—art thou rooted in the "Rock of Ages"—art thou growing in grace—dost thou, by thy union to Christ, bring forth fruit unto God—is the Lord near in thy mouth, and far from thy heart—art thou happy when thou dealest very treacherously with thy Lord? O God, thou searchest the heart, and triest the reins! nothing can be hid from thy all-seeing eye. I plead with thee, in the name of Jesus—"search me, and try me." Jesus lives to plead for all who come unto thee by him. The blood of Jesus pleads—his wounded side, his pierced hands and feet plead my cause; he is a wonderful Counsellor—I have no other; he is clothed with righteousness—I have none, and can only stand before thee clothed in his; he is mighty to save—I have no other strength. I plead with thee, O God, and let me talk with thee of thy dear Son; behold him, and accept me in him. I can only approach thee in his name and righteousness—my tongue cannot utter the half that is in my heart, it is praise alone to Jesus, the brightness of the Father's glory, that fills the soul.

APRIL 18.—*What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: Now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.*—1 KINGS xii. 16.

There is a centre point to which the soul appears continually to be irresistibly drawn. It is not literal Israel, nor Israel's earthly king, neither, David, the son of Jesse, that my soul is beholding in this Scripture. In types and figures the substance of the gospel is shadowed forth—Christ is preached from the beginning to the end. The Church, in the wilderness of old was a selected people, some of whom died in unbelief, and some died in faith, believing the promises—believing in him who was to come. Israel divides, and the greater part—yes, ten out of twelve tribes—rebel against their lawful king; and is it not still so with the visible Church? Oh, my soul, what awful words, whether spoken, or manifested in act; for do not those who follow any but the Lord Jesus Christ entirely—who set up idols to rest on, to bow down unto—who exalt man above Jesus, and deny the sovereignty of God—do they not virtually say, “What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents O Israel: Now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed?” And let Israel depart, but do thou my soul, see to thine own house, and look unto Judah, who remain faithful to the house David—look at their portion in him who is the root and the offspring of David, yet David's Lord—to their inheritance in the Son of God. Let the arrogancy of Israel reject the portion and deride the inheritance, but Judah will cleave to *their Lord, who hath procured a portion in all the*

glory he himself is heir to—an inheritance in-
 tible, in which Israel has no portion, neither
 part. “*But ye believe not, because ye are no
 sheep, as I said unto you*” (John x. 26). O
 hardness of man’s rebel heart! We all, by
 cry out, “We will not have this man to reign
 —we will have our portion in this world—our
 portion this side Jordan, and remain in our
 Grace alone can change our flinty hearts,
 Almighty power of the Spirit bring us to know
 Jesus with the eye of faith—to cleave to his
 full purpose of heart—see in him our portion
 and for ever—our inheritance, which fadeth not.
 Nor would we abide in our tents—we are tending
 on to our heavenly rest, our desired haven—
 separated from the beloved, for a season—our
 gone to prepare a place, and will come again
 us to himself. Oh, Judah, thou art everlasting
 in thy King! but do not learn the ways of the
 Israel—let them go to their tents, but do not
 unto Jesus, thy portion; and, my soul, see
 own house. Jesus is the keeper—the Spirit
 thy guide, or thou wilt stumble on some dan-
 gerous path. Lord Jesus, to thee alone can I look—
 alone depend—“Thou hast the words of eter-
 —thou art the bread of life; “Judah shall
 safely,” is thy promise—and thy promise can-
 fail. Glory to thee for ever!

APRIL 19.—*But we are bound to give thanks
 God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord
 God hath, from the beginning, chosen you
 tion, through sanctification of the Spirit, and
 of the truth.*—2 THESS. ii. 13, and follow

What a gospel fulness in these words! what a comprehensiveness of doctrine, and what brotherly exhortation follow! The apostle feels bound to give thanks to God alway for his brethren beloved of the Lord—for why? Because God had chosen them from the beginning. My soul, thou seest here the eternal love and choice of God the Father—the being chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth—called by the gospel to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle does not stand in doubt, but is fully confident of their state. “Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold what ye have been taught;” and what a conclusion—what a summing up of the whole! “Now the Lord, Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father which hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation, and good hope, through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.” Oh, my soul, the heavenly blessedness of realizing these words! to *believe in the heart* the everlasting love and choice of God—to *know* your calling, and to see, by faith, the glory that awaits you—the glory of the Lord! and to have, through grace, and grace alone, everlasting consolation, and good hope; and this the gift of God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ; and to the Triune God we can look, to comfort our hearts, and to stablish us in every good word and work. Oh, to have a covenant God to depend upon! The mercy of the Father in choosing—the love of Jesus in redeeming—the sanctification of the Spirit in calling—the work of the Spirit in perseverance, to the obtaining the glory laid up in Christ for all who come to God by him. Oh, my soul, to be made to feel these great realities, that the love of God has given such blessings,

through grace, doth it not comfort thy heart, stablish thee in every good word and work, strengthen thee in the word of God, the work of Jesus, and give thee a fervent desire for the help of the Spirit to bring thee to believe—to rest, to trust, to hope in Jesus alone—to love and to follow him through “evil report and good report”—this blessed Saviour, who hath redeemed thee with his precious blood, and raised thee to be a partaker of his glory? Amen and Amen.

APRIL 20.—*According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.*—1 TIM. i. 11.

My soul, the text is short, but comprehensive enough for deep meditations; and if *thy* words be few, let thy gratitude be unbounded as thy love must be everlasting for “the glorious gospel of the blessed God,” of which thou has been called to partake. *How* glorious, what tongue can tell? Glorious in purpose, glorious in effect, glorious in mercy, glorious in justice, glorious in the gift of peace, glorious in the message of warning, glorious in the salvation of the repenting sinner, glorious in the condemnation of the rejecting sinner, glorious in time, glorious through eternity! And is not this glorious gospel of the blessed God committed to the trust of every renewed soul? Oh, thou blessed God, give thy Spirit to make me faithful and watchful, and prayerful, and thankful for thy glorious gospel of mercy, and forbearance and loving-kindness, to a vile and wretched sinner—the glorious gospel of “peace and good-will”—glorious in the life and obedience, the death and atonement of Jesus—glorious in his resurrection and ascension—glorious in his justifying righteousness—

glorious in his continual intercession, and glorious in his second coming to be glorified in his saints. My soul, the gospel of the blessed God is full of glory, and joy unspeakable, to the broken-hearted, the bruised reed, the smoking flax, the poor, the needy. To Jesus, who will not break, nor quench, nor cast out, be *all*, *all* the glory, for the glorious gospel of the blessed God !

APRIL 21.—*Ah, Lord God, behold thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.*—JER. xxxii. 17, and two following verses.

The Old Testament saints worshipped the true God in unity—they died in faith, looking for the promised Messiah, of whom their prophets prophesied ; but a veil was on their hearts, and their minds were blinded, so that they understood not the nature of him that was to come. How beautifully does this prayer of the prophet set forth “ the Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of Hosts ”—great in counsel and mighty in work—the Creator of heaven and earth, whose power unlimited, and his sovereign will accomplishing whatsoever seemeth him good—showing loving-kindness to thousands, recompensing the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children—his eyes upon all the children of men, to give to every one according to his ways and the fruit of his doings. Here we behold the great, the mighty Jehovah, as revealed in the thunders of Sinai, whose law and word are immutable and unchangeable, whose holiness and justice cannot remit a jot or tittle in the perfect performance of his holy law—“ He that sinneth he shall

die," and "he that offendeth in one point is all," in the sight of an infinitely holy God.

Now, my soul, contemplate this Might; Jehovah, Lord of Hosts, under the covenant as revealed in the new Testament, the same A Creator of all things, working according to th of his own will, "and there is nothing too thee." But, O my soul, the thunders of S rolled away—the children no longer bear the of the fathers, and thy reward is no longer ing to thy ways, or the fruit of thy doing God of grace reveals himself in the face of Christ—not as a consuming fire, but a God and mercy. The New Testament saints are covenant of grace, and not of works—a law and not a law of unerring obedience; they b a crucified Saviour, who *has* come—not through a glass darkly, for an expected Jesus is the narrow path to everlasting life—but sure, to all the seed of Jacob. Jesus ha ciled sinners to God—he is the Captain of to his true followers, and will lead them to th of holies—"The vail is done away in Christ" and shadows, and sacrifices are all complete promised Messiah, and whosoever believeth hath eternal life. This is the great God Saviour, reconciling man unto himself—rebels home to their Father's house—seek saving the lost sheep, and bringing them Bishop of their souls. Praise, ye saints, the grace, serve him in the beauty of holines him from the law of love—glory to his holy

*-I will mention the loving-kindness of the
the praises of the Lord, according to all
Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great
owards the house of Israel, which he hath
m them, according to his mercies, and ac-
the multitude of his loving-kindnesses.—
iii. 7.*

ere brought to meditate on the inspired
other saint of old, who prophesied so
im who was to come. Here is the gospel
ealed before it was fulfilled. It is assur-
urch, by the mouth of the prophet, that
n such holy rapture; here is a confirma-
t my soul was led in the former medita-
es, yes! it is all of mercy to the house of
any of Adam's guilty rebels are saved;
t condemn, but mercy saves; every mortal
n race deserves nothing but wrath and
ut the loving-kindness of the Lord brings
Every soul of Adam's progeny rejects, by
erve God in love and holiness; the con-
ower of his Holy Spirit alone can bring
ill into a law of love. It is grace, my
ace alone that has subdued thy hardened
rought thee at the feet of Jesus, to bathe
thy tears; and now, let the praises of the
thy lips, flowing from love in thy heart,
s in thy life, for all that the mercy and
ness of the Lord hath done for thy soul.
Amen.

APRIL 23.—*And the woman said to Elijah, now this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.*
1 KINGS xvii. 24.

My soul is led in this Scripture to observe the unbelief of the human heart. Notwithstanding the miraculous interposition of the Lord in preserving this widow alive, in a time of famine, by the instrumentality of the prophet, yet, when her son was, by the hand of the Lord, afflicted with a sickness unto death, she reproaches Elijah, as coming to her to bring her sin to remembrance, and to slay her son; but when the Lord is pleased to hear the cry of Elijah and to bring her son to life, then “the woman said to Elijah, now by *this I know*,” &c. This is unbelief, my soul, which must have evidences of God’s working; thou must see with the eyes—must, with Thomas, see the Lord’s wounds, and thrust his hand into his side, and he will not believe. Faith believes what it sees; no man trusts God’s promises when his providences are dark, and believes, after he has been faithful in six troubles, he will not forsake in the seventh. Faith gives up only his son to the Lord, believing that he could raise him from the dead; unbelief says, *now by this* when I see I know thou art a man of God. Faith believes God and his word, under trials the most bitter, and in sweet submission to his will, says with Eli, “It is the Lord,” and with Job, “Blessed be the name of the Lord,” and, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust him;” unbelief says, with Jonah, for a trifle, “I will not be angry.” Oh, my soul, gather up the crumbs of faith which fall from thy Lord’s table! Let that nothing of the precious word be lost upon thee; it is the word of the Lord, which is truth, and depend

not on the mouth from whence it issues. Trust in the Lord at all times—let him take all; but if faith hold on, thou canst still rejoice, and stay thyself upon his love. Flesh is well pleased to walk by sight, and to have all it craves after, and then it is, “by *this* I know;” but Spirit sees things with the eye of faith not seen with the eye of sense, and loves the hand, whether it give or take—leans on the Lord, and blesses him for trials. Looking at, and believing in, Jesus, my soul can defy a host of foes; but without thee, I can do nothing. Lord, give thy Spirit—give the faith—give all, and do all, thou must! “Through thee we are more than conquerors.”

APRIL 24.—*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*—1 TIM. vi. 12 and 16 verses.

The two verses presented for this day's meditation, give an admonition to the believer, and a glorious acknowledgment of him who is the believer's joy, and the sinner's only refuge. “Fight the good fight of faith.” Yes, my soul, the believer's path is a continual field of battle—cease to fight, Satan gains the day—stand at ease, thou wilt enter into temptation—sleep on guard, a severe chastisement awaits thee; desert thy company, drop thy colours, lay aside thy armour, thou must be held as a traitor. But the fight of faith is not in nature's strength; blessed be the God of grace, faith fights in Jesus' strength, and becomes more than conqueror. Oh, the blessedness of “laying hold on eternal life!” making your calling and election sure. Oh, blessed gift of God the Spirit! will not a sense of *redeeming love* cause a longing desire

in the soul to manifest a good profession before the witnesses of thy faith? Yet it is thou, O Lord, that must help us to run the race, continually looking unto thee—to thee, “who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto: whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” Jesus, thou alone revealest the Father, and reflectest his image; thou only can show his glory to created man; thou art the source of light, life, and immortality; thou, the Friend of sinners, the Redeemer of lost man, the Saviour of a guilty race, “to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”

APRIL 25.—*His glory is great in thy salvation; honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him; for thou hast made him most blessed for ever; thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.*—Ps. xxi. 5, 6.

When Jesus comes before us, when the King of kings is revealed to faith's eye, whether it be in his word, or to our souls, at the footstool of his throne, we feel our spiritual vision cleared, mountains of unbelief rolled away from our hearts, and the Scriptures appear without ambiguity or veil. Jesus is revealed to my soul in this Scripture, and when he is seen all is light. Not even to “Solomon in all his glory” can we adapt this Psalm. The glory of Jesus was great, indeed, in the salvation Jehovah bestowed upon his Church; honour and majesty was laid upon him. Thou hast made him most blessed for ever; Jesus exalted on high—no longer humbled on earth, suffering on the cross but ascended to the right hand of the Most Holy One. Thou hast seen the travail of thy soul, and thou art made exceeding glad with Jehovah's countenance. It is to Jesus, my soul's continual

ensor, I would look—my High Priest—my King,
 gn for ever and ever! Of *his* kingdom there
 be no end; his people shall be brought from all
 rners of the earth, to bow before him, and sub-
 his dominion. Jesus shall reign with his people
 usly—grace leads to glory—Jesus leads the way
 eternal—the sting of death is lodged in his holy
 ; and has lost its venom—the grave opens
 n's gates, and victory is gained by Jesus, our
 Lord.

L 28.—*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them,
 they follow me; and I give unto them eternal
 , and they shall never perish, neither shall any
 ck them out of my hand.*—JOHN x. 27, 28.

essed, blessed, blessed words! What can faith
 more than such an assurance, from the mouth of
 ord himself? Faith wants nothing stronger
 this; and my soul looks back and sees in this
 d promise the first-ripe fruit of faith applied to
 lty conscience; but unbelief says, the promise is
 d most precious, and Jesus will fulfil to the utter-
 all he hath engaged to do; *but am I* one of his
 ,P—am I one of the little lambs whom he carried
 bosom?—one whom he gently led when travelling
 e *new birth*? Faith says, disparage not the work
 ace, nor let the devilish tempter in, who would
 thee in reality, if he could, of thy rich inherit-
 —thy heavenly treasure—thy pearl of great price
 r everlasting hope—thy continual joy—thy chief
 lation, which are all treasured up in Jesus.
 ed Lord, give me, I pray thee, increasing evi-
 e of my being one of thy sheep—help me to hear
 voice, and give heed to it, “I am the way, walk

ye in it ; " help me to follow thee in the narrow
 of self abasement, that thou alone may be exalte
 my heart! What a promise! "My sheep shall n
 perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my ha
 O Lord, there is no falling from grace, if thy wor
 true. Thou givest eternal life to thy sheep, and
 keep to the end those whom thou hast loved !
 everlasting. Yes, Lord, thy work is too comple
 thy word too sure—thy will too immutable—thy l
 too precious—thy righteous vesture too perfect ev
 fail ; not one of thy sheep *can* be lost ; all for w
 thou hast died shall be brought to glory, thr
 grace. Jesus let thy love be my law, and reig
 my heart ; in thy strength help me to fight ag
 unbelief, sin, and Satan, and faith shall ascribe vic
 victory to the Lamb that was slain !

Eternal praise to Jesus I would give,
 Who breath'd new life, and bade a rebel live.
 In sweetest accents came "a still small voice,"
 "My sheep shall never perish." Soul, rejoice !

APRIL 27.—*Better is little with the fear of the
 than great treasure and trouble therewith. Bet
 a dinner of herbs, where love is, than a stalled
 and hatred therewith.*—PROV. xv. 16, 17.

My soul, of what benefit would all the treasure
 the earth be to *thee* ? Can they save thee from l
 Can they purchase heaven ? Can they buy God's fav
 or the love of Jesus ? Can they procure his interces
 or the Spirit's work of regenerating grace ? Ah
 no ! treasures can do nothing for the soul—they
 procure a few time-state, perishing enjoyments fo
 dying body, but to *this* they can neither give he
 nor life, nor strength, neither durability to es

fleeting joys. "Better," as the wise king saith, "the fear of the Lord" than thousands, thousands of treasures; the fear of the Lord in the heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, leading to filial fear, and ending in adopting love, is of more value to thee, my soul, than all the gold of Ophir; and oh, how infinitely better a dinner of herbs, with the love of Jesus in the heart, than thousands of stalled oxen, and hatred therewith. Where, O my soul, will a hatred to God, his word, his way, and work of redemption send thee? Where, the rejection of his dear Son? Lord, Lord, take all away, but leave me my hope of everlasting life in Jesus—take all my earthly treasure, but take not this treasure; not only my dinner, but let my breakfast and supper be of herbs, so that thou leavest me the bread of eternal life—the heavenly manna—the durable riches, treasured up in thyself. Let all be taken, but leave the hope of enjoying thy presence through an eternity. Amen and Amen.

APRIL 28.—*I pray for them: I pray not for the world but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.*—JOHN xvii. 9, 10.

Oh, that my soul could more fully enter into the blessed union spoken of by our glorious Head, while sojourning upon earth! Oh, that my people, Lord, were more sensibly alive to their union to thee, and to each other in thee! Lord, give us the spirit of prayer for one another, as thou prayedst for thine, given to thee by the Father! Thou didst not pray for the world, which was not in the covenant of grace; thou couldst not pray for the son of perdition, but for those who were the Father's before the world began;

"and *all* mine are thine, and thine are mine saith. Oh, the glory of covenant love—the union and fellowship with the Father, Son, Spirit! And Jesus is glorified in his people in their salvation. Jesus also saith, "I pray for these alone, but for them also which shall believe through their word."

Blessed Lord, if it accord with thy will spirit of prayer to thy wandering sheep? Canst thou not only to ask for ourselves, but for each of thy members already called in to the fold of the Spirit's might, with one heart and voice before thy throne, to pray for the welfare of —pray for the union of thy children during one spirit; to feel their oneness with thee may have more love to one another, to glorify in thee thou art, and shall be glorified in them for

APRIL 29.—*For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from the snare that I may walk before God in the light of life.*
—PSALM lvi. 13.

Three particulars I am led to notice in this precious Scripture. 1st. The blessed assurance of the soul being delivered from death, "thou hast delivered my soul from death?" The Lord is pleased to break in upon the soul with this sweet assurance, after it has been bowed down by a deep and humbling sense of the desperate and deceitfulness of the heart, then joy succeeds sorrow and mourning, which can be experienced by those who have had sin revealed by the Spirit of holiness, pardon applied by the blood of Jesus, as cleansing from all sin, and joy

brought with power to the *heart*, by the *alone* righteousness of him who only is pure and holy. It is salvation *entirely* in Christ which brings joy unspeakable, and peace passing understanding, to the sin-stricken soul. Oh, my soul, must thou not know this for thyself? Yea, truly; no one can intermeddle with thy joy. 2nd. We observe, not a petition, nor the full exercise of faith—"Wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling?" Wilt thou not do this for me also, guard me from evil, guide me in the way, keep me in the slippery places of this sinful world, from falling—not from grace, but into temptation—falling into many hurtful snares, which Satan, and the sin of our nature, continually present to the new-born soul. And why is this half-doubting, half-confident supplication—this "*wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling,*" my heart from backsliding, my tongue from being silent in thy praise, my lips from holding back thy truth? Because (3rd.) not for my own glory, nor comfort, nor joy, but "that I may walk before God in the light of the living," that I might glorify thee, O my Lord—walk before thee in the light thou givest to quickened souls. Wilt thou not keep me, that I may not walk in darkness—that I may not forfeit my joy and peace—that I may not walk as the dead? Is not this the soul's constant desire? Thou *hast* (oh, precious assurance!) saved my soul from death—wilt thou not keep me from disgracing thy name, and the faith I have professed?

Jesus, it is all in thee, and all comes from thee: grace and life, strength and wisdom—power to withstand and prevail—strength to resist and conquer. Lord, *wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling?* Oh, for thine own sake, preserve me from the snares of

the world without, and the world within ! Let the great things thou hast done for my soul be ever present to my remembrance, that I may run the race set before me, walking in the light of him who is all light, the only true light, and whoever liveth to give light and life which can never fail. All the praise be thine, O Jesus, for what thou hast done, art doing, and wilt do ! Amen, amen.

APRIL 30.—*For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*—MAL. iii. 6.

Oh, the blessedness of believing that the Lord changeth not ! This is the stronghold of faith—here is a continual resource for the soul that sees flesh can do nothing towards its acceptance with God. In times, when unbelief comes in, doubts arise, in unlooked-for or unguarded quarters, when flesh trembles at the sight of self, and, may be, shrinks at the thought of the last enemy's approach, is not this a stronghold for faith to resort to, " For I am the Lord, I change not ; therefore (yes, *therefore*) ye sons of Jacob are not consumed ? " Oh, my soul, if the Lord were as thy poor, unstable, vacillating frames and feelings, faith and obedience, thou mightest be in his favour one moment and out of it the next—to-day it might please him to exalt thee to heaven, and to-morrow cast thee into hell ; but no, " Jehovah is not a man, that he should lie, nor the son of man, that he should repent." He changeth not—his purposes are fixed, and the sons of Jacob are saved with an everlasting salvation, neither depending on faith nor works, but on the complete and finished work of him who became a Surety and Ransom for his people. In Jesus they are secure from the consuming fire of God's holy law

the infinite requirements of his justice; it is in obedience of Jesus they are accepted, or they are consumed. The work of redemption is complete—the word of God is passed—the covenant is made, and the sons of Jacob are safe—their names are engraved on the breastplate of their High Priest, was by the unchanging word of Jehovah, made a gift for ever. The Holy Spirit calls in the scattered remnant of the heavenly kingdom of grace here below, an effectual calling, convinces of sin, and “takes away the things of Jesus and shows them unto us,” who have been brought to believe in the Saviour of sinners, the only way of access unto God, and are, by the unchangeableness of him “*who changeth not*,” “kept in faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in due time.”

MAY.

1.—*And one of the malefactors which was hanged led on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. . . . And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*—**MR xxiii. 39, 42.**

where is my soul now brought—is it not a heart-breaking scene which comes before thee? And well is it thee if it prove, or has proved, a heart-breaking

My heart seems as if it would turn from this sad spectacle, to behold my Lord risen—his sufferings over, and ever living to “see of the fruit of his soul,” and to be satisfied with his finished and glorious work. But Calvary I cannot leave, led to meditate on the contrast of the two characters brought before me in these verses. Here are two

sinners—equally guilty—equally suffering in the presence of one who alone could save them from the wrath of God ; and yet, O my soul, what a difference in the effect produced—one agonizing on the cross in death before him, stepping into eternity as a wretch ! Hardened in sin, he rails on Jesus ; tauntingly exclaims, “ *If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us.* ” Neither his sins nor his prayers have softened his hard heart ; and the holiness of God to his unchanged nature would have been a curse to his degraded soul, and he would there have had the purity he could not enjoy. He remained in darkness—unrenewed, unrepenting—and dying, as his fellow malefactor said, the just for the unjust, for his deeds, both in body and soul. Could there be salvation for his soul, dying in such a frame ? No, impossible ! But the repentant sinner—the sensible feeling sinner—the ploring sinner, finds “ grace to help in time of need ” and Jesus turns not away from such ; in the hour of the death on the cross his ear was open to the penitent suppliant—his confession was heard—his prayer prevailed with—him who only can forgive and answer prayer ; and his ransomed soul rejoiced—oh, how greatly have we rejoiced in the sound of forgiving love and tender mercy reaching the ear of his expiring body, “ Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. ” One man said of the two thieves, “ Let none perish who repent none despair. ” Oh, my soul, justice *must* condemn the guilty—grace alone can save—and Almighty God only, bring the rebel heart of man to a heart-softening of sin, and grace to cry for mercy. Lord Jesus *open*, no man can shut—if thou shut, no

pen. One is taken the other left—the unrenewed sinner dies in his sins, the renewed sinner is indebted to grace and mercy that his sins are forgiven. Thy will be done, Lord God Almighty, on earth as in heaven! Thy word, thy unchangeable word is gone forth, “He that believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned!”

MAY 2.—*There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.*—PROV. xiii. 7.

Who is he that maketh himself rich yet hath nothing? Many, many parts of the Holy Scriptures will give a reply to the question; one answer of the Spirit is, “Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art (spiritually) wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Rev. iii. 17). Oh, my soul if thou art rich in thyself—if thy riches centre in anything in this vain world—if rich in carnal security, in nature’s gifts alone—if blind to thy exceeding sinfulness and the deep depravity of thy heart—if thy treasure, all thy treasure be not above, then art thou poor indeed; yes, if thou makest thyself rich in that which will not endure through eternity, thou truly hast nothing. Everything earthy shall perish; nature produces nothing but from earth. Nature’s morality, nature’s good works, are nothing worth for eternity—and “thou art rich, yet hath nothing;” but “there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.” Where doth my soul look now? Out of self it must get; and yet self must not be left out. There is one who said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the

kingdom of heaven ;" and the Spirit which the Churches also said, "I counsel of thee to me gold, that thou mayest be rich." Oh, the price of this world is riches for eternity ! The poor spirit, the contrite sinner, the lowly in mind that feel themselves wretched, and naked, who have been anointed by the Holy Spirit, with the salve of regeneration, whose nakedness has been covered with white raiment—these are rich in the eyes of God, for their riches are not their own, neither in the keeping, therefore safe—not of earth, therefore lasting as eternity—not of nature's providing, but the rich provisions of grace—not the gift of nature, but of natural morality, nor good works, but grace wrought by faith—not centred on earth, but triumphing up in heaven—a goodly pearl of great price—that thieves cannot steal, that neither moth nor rust can corrupt. Oh, my soul, this is the true treasure, all beside, time shall take from thee ; death shall take thee from, and the grave would rot ; but the treasure thou hast gained by being spiritually poor, death cannot rob thee of, death will put thee in possession, the grave cannot corrupt ; for it cannot contain that which cleaveth not to the body of corruption. But is there not, my soul, one who *himself* poor, yet had great riches ? Canst thou think of thy adorable Lord, who became poor through *his* poverty might become rich ? Yes, Jesus, *in thee* thy members are one *with thee* art the first-born among many brethren, and the first-fruit of all riches—the first-fruits, and will be the last ingathering of thy rich harvest for ever. In thee are all the unsearchable riches which *unfolding* for ever and ever—the length, depth, and breadth will never be fathomed nor ex-

MAY 3.—*That, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life.*
—TITUS iii. 7.

It has pleased the Holy Spirit to teach thee, my soul, that with God all things are yea and amen—that he has vested in himself the sovereign power to reign and rule, according to his own good pleasure and will; with him there never was, nor ever will be *time*—eternity is behind him, eternity before him; there is neither beginning nor end with the Holy One, the Lord of Hosts; so that my soul seeth that the elect Church “was justified by the grace,” or favour of God, from everlasting—that her members should “be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life,” “which God (as the second verse of the first chapter states), that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” It is the everlasting purpose, and the unchangeableness of a covenant God in Christ that the soul delights to rest on. Justified freely by his grace from eternity—not by works of righteousness, but according to his mercy—called in time—made heirs of God, and joint-heirs with the first-born, the elder Brother—in the hope of eternal life, promised to all the seed. To thee, my soul, this verse conveys the thought of the past, the present, and the future—God’s favour from everlasting. The Spirit’s call in time, to give the spirit of adoption, to proclaim to the soul its heirship—“the water of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Ghost shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;” the new birth, the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit—these, the present, the time-state blessings to the heirs of salvation, heirs according to the hope of eternal life—not the life *that now is, but eternal, everlasting life*;

and thus the soul looks at the future, lives in hope the life to come; faith stretches forth to that beyond the grave, sees the glorious resurrection of the Forerunner, and hope anticipates, with joyful expectation the release of the imprisoned spirit from the cumbrous load of clay, to be for ever with the Lord. This is faith's happy realizing experience, when the eye is fixed on Jesus, and Jesus only; let it wander from this resting-place, unbelief assaults the soul, and robs it of that peace, which is secure in Jesus.

Help me, dear Lord, to look alone to thee
 For peace, for life, for immortality;
 Help me upon thy endless love to rest,
 And lean securely on thy faithful breast;
 So faith shall triumph, unbelief give way,
 And hope anticipate that future day.
 When all thy ransom'd round thy throne shall meet,
 And cast their crowns of glory at thy feet.

MAY 4.—*And he answered, thou shall not smite them: wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive? . . . Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.*—2 Kings vi. 22.

Oh, the sweet gospel spirit we see displayed in this Scripture, by the prophet of the Lord! How are the divine precepts of our Messiah, and Elisha's Messiah set forth by him who served the only true God, and who was living by faith on him that was to come! Who shall Elisha give heed to the King of Israel? Does he seek to please an earthly prince, while he professes to be a prophet of Jehovah? Will he return evil for evil? Will he lift up the sword upon the captive taken by his hand, through the help of the God in whom he trusts and to whom he prayed? No! "Thou shalt u

smite them," answered the prophet; and was this forbearance all? Oh, no! this were only half of the divine gospel precept—"If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink"—"Set bread and water before them," said Elisha. Does the prophet of the Lord stop here? and are there bounds set to the law of love? The law of commandments says, an eye for an eye; but "love worketh no ill to his neighbour;" and the Divine Law-fulfiller said, "Bless them that curse you, and do good to them that despitefully use you." Elisha prepared great provisions, and when they had eaten and drunk he sent them away. My soul would learn a lesson from Elisha; first, to look unto him who was greater than Elisha—greater than Solomon in all his glory—to him through whom grace was given to Old Testament saints and New Testament saints—who procured every good and perfect gift bestowed upon Adam's race; then I would look at the commands of my heavenly Prophet and Teacher, King and Ruler, Priest and all-sufficient sacrifice—I would implore the Holy Spirit to teach me forgiveness to my enemies—to render good for evil—when reviled, not to revile again—forbearance to all, and love to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity.

MAY 5.—*A man shall not be established by wickedness; but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.*—
 PROV. xii. 3.

Oh, no! man shall not be established by wickedness, for then would the kingdom of Satan prevail; but, thanks be to God, man is established by that which cannot be moved, and the candle of the wicked shall be put out. *Man is established by righteousness*

—and this not his own, for then it would be a very uncertain establishment; “But the root of the righteous shall not be moved.” Now, my soul would inquire, what is the root of the righteous? and it plainly perceiveth, there is but one root that can never be moved—the root of him who came upon this earth conquering, and to conquer—travelling in the greatness of his strength—mighty to save. Is it not established in eternity—is it not a root settled, eternally settled in a rock that nothing can hurt or destroy.

Yes, it is Jesus who is the righteous one, the holy one; and though he was the offspring, yet he was the root of David. And here, my soul, is thy eternal security—for as Christ is so are his members; if rooted in Christ, there is no power can tear thee from him—his root is thine: neither sin, nor Satan, nor death, nor hell can separate what God hath joined. The Eternal Jehovah is the root of Jesus, and Jesus is the root of his redeemed—they in him, and he in God—“He in them, that they may be one, even as he and the Father are one.” Blessed union—a union never to be broken—a root never to be moved—settled before the world began, and to endure when time shall be no more. Then, O Lord, grant to thy Church the abundance of the Holy Spirit, that much fruit of faith, of holiness, and love may be brought forth, to the praise and glory of thyself, for from thee is the fruit found of those who are rooted in thee, who can never be moved—thou, the Rock of Ages—the bright and morning Star. Glory, glory to the Lamb for ever!

MAY 6. — *Which in his time he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.*—1 TIM. vi. 15.

The soul burdened under a sense of sin can only find peace in the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God; and when the blood of Jesus is applied unto the conscience, and peace proclaimed by the all-sufficient sacrifice, oh, how does the soul rejoice in the first advent of a gracious Redeemer! And when the Spirit of holiness enters the soul, it grieves in the midst of rejoicing at the aboundings of sin, both within the precinct of its own citadel, and without the walls. Under grace the unceasing cry is, "Lord, subdue mine iniquities!" The righteous soul can bless the power of restraining grace, and cry, "Who hath made me to differ?" when the power of Satan is seen raging in the world, under all shapes and colours. Sweetly realizing an interest in the *first* advent of the Lord from heaven, the soul can contemplate with delight the *second* appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, when, in his own time, he shall come in power and great glory, and show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Oh, when viewing the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the wretched state of fallen man, the iniquity that aboundeth on the earth, how cheering to the soul that feels its union to Jesus, is the anticipation of his coming the second time, without sin, finally to destroy sin and death, and to reign a King for ever with his people; when "he shall come whose right it is to reign;" Satan's kingdom for ever put down, and the heirs of the kingdom no longer subject to death, neither to sin (oh, blessed day), *shall dwell for ever with him who only hath*

immortality, who alone can dwell in the light which no man can approach unto. Lord, help me to wait with patience the coming of thy kingdom, thy power, and thy glory ! Amen. Praise ye the Lord.

MAY 7.—*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you ; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*—JOHN xiv. 27.

If there can be a heaven upon this polluted earth, it surely is when Jesus speaks "peace" to the sin-stricken soul. It is a peace which passeth understanding—a peace not as the world giveth—a peace the world cannot take away—a piece which no created thing can bestow. The "peace" which flows from Jesus will last for eternity ; when creature-help, creature-love, fail, the peace which Jesus giveth will stand firm and unshaken, therefore my soul, "let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid ;" if your peace be fixed on Jesus, you have support for all the trials of life, for all the struggles of death ; for a sinner there can be no peace if Jesus do not give it—i.e., a sinner who feels the condemning power on his soul. A Spirit-taught soul can never find peace out of Jesus, when sin has been sealed upon the conscience ; when the holiness of God also appears in such majesty and glory, that it becomes a consuming fire—where sin, with all its direful consequences, has laid its iron grasp upon the guilt-stricken soul, an arm of flesh can then afford no relief—it must be the blood of sprinkling, that which alone cleanseth from all sin, that must be applied, with pardoning efficacy, before peace can be obtained ; and when this peace is spoken

—when the soul is content to receive all through the Lamb of God—to give Jesus all the glory and all the praise—then truly does peace flow in like a river—a peace as unlike the peace the world giveth as light differs from darkness; and it is an abiding peace, which trials and tribulations bind closer and closer upon the soul. But the eye of faith must be kept on Jesus to realize the sweetness at these times—the hand emptied of every earthly dependence, and the heart in humble submission to all the trying dispensations—*then* to feel the presence and support of the Lord is peace indeed. In swelling billows, fiery trials, trouble succeeding trouble—oh, then, by faith, to hear the Saviour's voice! "Peace I give unto you"—"Let not your heart be troubled." Oh, this is a peace the world cannot give, and, blessed be thy name, can never take away! "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." Oh, my soul, if all thy peace, thy joy be derived from this eternal "Rock of Ages," then no earthly trial shall spoil thee of this treasure—"Peace in Jesus."

MAY 8.—*As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*—JOHN xvii. 2, 3.

If there were not another passage in the Holy Scriptures to prove the sovereign power and electing love of God in Christ Jesus, this would be sufficient; here is subject enough, not merely for a noon-day meditation, but for the morning, noon, and evening of time; but which eternity only can fully disclose. *Brief must be the meditations* of time, my soul—a

sip of the brook by the way is all that time can stow, but there is an eternal life to come, when draughts of joy shall be taken from the living Rock, *never, never* to cease ; when my soul will be delivered from the thick veil in which it is now shrouded, and sight will confirm what faith expects ; *then* will it be in vain for God's sovereignty to be rejected, and electing love to be reviled by those who are placed at the left hand of " Him who hath power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him." And shall puny man, thou High and Holy One, dispute thy power and thy right to do these things, thou wilt?—shall unbelief contend with the words from the mouth of Jesus ? Oh, that my soul may bend, with holy submission, to the word, and follow the ways, of my Almighty Guide. To *thee*, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent—this is life eternal ; and this life is treasured up in Jesus, over which the second death has no power. Jesus, the power is thine—the work of redemption is thine—the gift of eternal life is thine—and the glory shall all be thine. Jesus, to *know* thee with saving faith, is peace on earth, and joy through all eternity ; and sinners, saved by grace, shall glorify thee all the praise.

MAY 9.—*And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord ; thy faithfulness also in the congregation of saints.*—Ps. lxxxix. 5th, and three following verses.

Now, my soul, thou art brought into a sweet confirmation of thy last meditation. The power, the majesty, the faithfulness, the wonders of the Lord *Hosts* are, by the psalmist, brought to my view and *lead me to praise more fervently the God of gra*

who has showed himself, in the face of his "dearly beloved Son," as the God of redeeming love manifesting himself openly to his saints in the latter day, sojourning with them in the flesh, and showing the mighty wonders of his almighty power, who was from everlasting, "For who can be compared to the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? God is greatly to be feared in the congregation of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him"—a godly fear, a holy reverence is due to thee. "O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?" And is not the Father revealed *in* and *by* the Son? did not the Father give the power to the Son? has he not committed all things into his hands? and does not the Son reveal the Father to whomsoever he will? (Matt. xi. 27). And does not Jesus reveal *himself* in the believer, as "the hope of glory?" does he not unlock the treasures of the Old Testament? was he not the hope of saints *then*—is he not the glory as well as the hope of saints *now*? Oh, blessed and glorious Three in One! and, O blessed Jesus, who hast united sinful man to thyself, that they may be one with thee and thy Father, all of whom receive the spirit of adoption in time, and shall, through eternity, ascribe, glory, glory to the glorious Three in One!

MAY 10.—*In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquities of Israel shall be sought for and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve.*—JEREMIAH 1. 20.

In what days, and in what time shall the iniquity

of Israel be sought for and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found? Can Israel be without iniquity, and Judah without sin? Has there been or can there be a time when any of the fallen race of Adam have been without sin? What says my heart—what says observation—what says tradition—what says record—and what saith the word of God, my soul? “There is none that doeth good—no, not one.” Then how is God’s word, here spoken by the prophet, confirmed? Why, he saith, “I will pardon them whom I reserve.” What! justice pardon the guilty—holiness see no sin in that which is all pollution? My soul must look away from every earthly thing; thou must go to the golden key, which unlocks the treasures of the spiritual kingdom, and in Christ Jesus thou wilt see the fulness of him that filleth all; and in him and by him, thou wilt first see love everlasting—love as the procuring cause of all spiritual blessings—therefore God spared not his only Son; then thou wilt see mercy, rich mercy, beaming forth in the face of Jesus Christ; then see that God can be just, and the justifier of all them that believe in Jesus! Justice is satisfied, and the law magnified and made honourable, by the complete and finished work of redemption, by a covenant God—pardon proclaimed by the blood of Jesus, so that the iniquity of Israel is washed away, and the sins of Judah cannot be found. What! are all other nations to perish in their sins, and this people to be so favoured? Oh, grace! matchless grace, that *all* were not left! And here my soul, behold the sovereignty of Jehovah; and who dare arraign his will? “I will pardon them whom I

reserve"—a remnant according to the election of grace. The day, the blessed day is come—the spiritual seed have, in Jesus, a Bearer of their sins—a Hider of their iniquities—an everlasting Rock—an Advocate on high before the throne—a Comforter below, to quicken, instruct, guide, control and safely conduct to the end. Glory, glory to Jesus! the Procurer of all blessings for time and eternity—the Head of his body the Church—the Husband of his Bride, whose sins he hath blotted out by his precious blood, whom he hath covered with his glorious garments to present her to himself without spot for his own glory, world without end. Amen and Amen.

MAY 11.—*For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*
—HEBREWS ii. 18.

Oh, precious, precious portion of the holy Scripture! Here see, my soul, thy Lord, and thy God! See him as man, taking thy nature; and, "in that he suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Oh, to be able to come to him as flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone—to be one with him, by his taking our nature—to be made one with God, by his giving us a new nature! Here is Jesus uniting sinful man with a holy God, for it is through his manhood only that we can approach the Godhead; infinite holiness must be a consuming fire to a creature born in sin and shapen in iniquity. But here we see Jesus, declared to be made like unto his brethren—able to succour them that are tempted. Oh, my soul, art thou under trial? behold thy merciful High Priest, touched with the feeling of thine infirmities; cast thy burden upon him and he will sustain

thee—he will hear the cry of the destitute. Jesus was tried and tempted too, but being without sin Satan found nothing in him ; yet, my soul, he knoweth thy trial—knows that thou art perfect weakness in thyself, which he is continually teaching thee—he knows that all thy strength is in himself. Look unto Jesus, then, in all thy trials, weakness, afflictions—he could weep at the tomb of Lazarus—he could look at erring Peter with pity's eye—he could let a sinner like thyself bathe his feet with her tears, and permit a disciple to lean on his bosom ; then, O my soul, behold Jesus—the Man Christ Jesus—thy all-in-all—the Man to feel—the God to help ! Glory and praise to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit !

MAY 12.—*If we let him thus alone all men will believe on him.*—JOHN xi. 48.

Holy Spirit, without thy aid, thy guidance, I cannot meditate to profit, nor improve thy word to the comfort of my soul, or to the establishment of my faith. I have meditated on this portion, Lord, and can see nothing but the pride, arrogancy, self-will, blindness, presumption, and mistakes of poor human nature. The law-priests and self-righteous Pharisee are but a picture of fallen man, who fell by pride and established himself in rebellion against his Creator. “If we let him alone.” Oh, the pride of man ! He fancies he has all things under his command—that he can control and influence the hearts of his fellow-men. “All will believe in him,” in their blindness they said ; but, my soul, thy faith doth surely teach thee to believe, that had Jesus remained upon earth to this day, there had still been multitudes to reject him besides the law-priests and Pharisees. “And

e Romans will come and take away our place and tion." Oh, self-interest! thou arbitrary swayer of an's actions. I can only view man in the odiousness of his fallen character; and this ever leads me to the glory of grace—the restoration of man through Jesus Christ and the *new life* given in consequence thereof, by the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost; and thus is man continually warned, that he cannot revail against God, and yet he will fight against the most high, usurp his prerogative in his own mind, and strive to frustrate his eternal purposes; but, blessed be God, it is now as it ever hath been, and shall be. Jesus must die, according to eternal decree, that his people perish not; and all that the Father hath given him shall come to him, though the law-priests, and the proud Pharisees gather themselves together against the Lord and his Christ.

MAY 13.—*And King Ahaz saw an altar that was at Damascus, and sent to Urijah, the priest, the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it.*—2 KINGS xvi. 10, 15.

Thou hast before entered upon this text,* and was led to view the state of professing Christians having an altar after their own fashion to sacrifice upon, while the Lord, the altar, was kept out of sight, and his name only made use of to keep the conscience at ease. From generals I feel led to particulars—from the Church collectively to the true members individually; and here, my soul, thou must come rationally; and now inquire of the Lord the Spirit, and shrink not from the searchings and probings of

* See "Gospel Magazine" for May, 1838—page 201.

thy faithful guide—inquire, I say, if thou hast not a spurious altar, upon which thou dost continually offer thy creature-sacrifices. O Lord, flesh is flesh still! and flesh will come with its sin-offerings, meat-offerings, and burnt sacrifices, in all the pride of self-seeking and self-glorying; and upon this fleshly altar are offered many a flesh-pleasing sacrifice, which must be abhorred and rejected by him who only requireth a broken heart and a contrite spirit, which believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ, and loveth him in truth and sincerity. O Lord, let the fire of thy love—not thy wrath—consume these flesh-pleasing offerings, and grant the power of thy Holy Spirit, that my soul may hate every false way—every fleshly altar—that Jesus may be seen as the only sacrifice in which the Father is well pleased. Jesus, the sin-offering, flesh-offering, burnt-offering, the altar and sacrifice thereon! Oh, grant that love to Jesus may consume all that is of flesh! Let no Damascus altar be set up in the heart! Let Jesus be the first, the last, the *only* hope for acceptance with a God, who, out of him, is a consuming fire—whom no created being can behold and live; but, in Jesus, “God is love.”

MAY 14.—*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*—HEB. iv. 16.

Here, my soul, thou art come to the substance, to which the shadow drew thy mind in thy last meditation—“Not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace.”

Here we are brought to our ever-living High Priest: then away, O my Soul, with every false altar—every

hol temple—every law-priest—every pharisaical phytory! and “come boldly to the throne of grace, at thou mayest obtain mercy, and find grace to help time of need;” grace to put off the deeds of the w, and to put on the new man, which is renewed after e image of Jesus Christ; grace to abhor thine own righteousness, and submit to the righteousness of God Christ; grace to resist the flesh and all its fascina-ns—the devil and all his arts—the world and all its btleties; grace to cast aside every false prop, and to n exclusively upon the omnipotent arm of thy deemer. Oh, my soul, for grace to come up from e wilderness, leaning upon thy Beloved! that self, atain, that Satan, might not have dominion over ee! Oh, for grace to subdue the deeds of the old an! to fight the good fight of faith, in the strength the Captain of thy salvation, who is gone before, lead thee and all his ransomed Israel into the omised land. Shout, then, my soul, continual praise Jesus! The walls of Jericho shall assuredly fall; id all that are brought to the kingdom of grace low shall reign with the Lord of all in his kingdom glory.

Shout, then, my soul! thou’rt saved by grace,
And soon shall see thy Saviour’s face,
Who ever lives to plead thy cause,
Thou breaker of God’s holy laws;
But pardoned by atoning blood,
A sinner’s reconciled to God.

AY 15.—*For Joshua drew not his hand back, where- with he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.*—JOSHUA viii. 26. What a lesson is opened to my soul, both in doc- ie and precept, from this text. I would fain be

Joshua-like, and “draw not back the hand wherewith the spear is stretched out until the inhabitants of Ai be utterly destroyed.” Are not my sins, and all earthly propensities the enemies of the Lord? How faithful was Joshua in doing that which was commanded! but how weak am I in utterly destroying the deeds of the flesh, which still cleave to my fallen nature! Well, my soul, look up to thy stronghold—come boldly to the throne of grace, and that power which put the spear into thy hand will as truly help thee to subdue thine enemies, as Joshua was helped and will give thee the power, as he has given the will and desire. And now, look beyond thyself, and be yond Joshua—take a spiritual view of this Scripture and behold the complete and finished work of redemption, which cannot be contemplated too often. The arm of Jesus is stretched out still, and he will not draw it back until his enemies, and thy enemies are utterly destroyed. Sin still dwells in thy member—death will destroy thy mortal part; but Jesus will not draw back the hand wherewith the spear is stretched out, until all are destroyed. He hath already gained one great and glorious victory; he hath in his own body triumphed over death, hell, and the grave and in his own time all shall be utterly destroyed, in his members, that oppose their peace here below: in their glorified bodies there can be no sin, and the second death shall have no power. Oh, my soul, what a powerful hand is stretched out! To Jesus be all praise, as to him belongeth all victory.

MAY 16.—*Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting-place; for a just man falleth seven times, and riseth again, but the wicked shall fall into mischief.*—PROV. xxiv. 15, 16.

How many are there who watch for the halting of the Lord's people ! who rejoice over one false step of those who have been, through grace, separated from the ways of the world, and have set up their banner on the Lord's side ; but, oh, rejoice not over the righteous, for he who standeth justified before God, through the merits of Jesus Christ the righteous, shall be preserved from the snares of the enemies, and though he fall seven times, he riseth again—this is the Spirit's witness. There must be a contest in the souls of the regenerate : and if they fall into a snare, from any of the three grand enemies, which do so make the souls of the righteous sad, there can be no peace until pardon is again proclaimed, and the efficacy of Jesus' all-cleansing blood applied to the stricken conscience. The faithful monitor is the blessed Comforter. My soul, thou shalt feel his restraining power, and his rebuking power, till the last ; and though thou fall seven times, thou shalt rise again ; the work begun shall never end, but with life ; the righteous shall hold on their way, for the Lord is their keeper, and will be faithful to his word. But, my soul, take heed to thy steps ; if thou art taken in the snare, it shall be bitterness to thy heart. Watch, then ! oh, watch, on the right and the left, that the wicked triumph not over thee—that thou disgrace not that holy name, whereby thou art called. "The wicked shall fall into mischief ;" they fall but rise not ; but praise to thee, O Lord, thou wilt help those

who trust thee ; thou art a wall of fire aroun
 righteous ; if they are preserved, it is thy pow
 they fall, thy power shall raise—so, blessed be the
 of the Lord : “ The Lord is on our side, we w
 fear what man can do unto us.” “ The Lord
 helper.” Amen and Amen.

MAY 17.—*Yet I am the Lord thy God, from t
 of Egypt, and thou shalt know no God but m
 there is no Saviour beside me.*—HOSEA xiii. 4

Blessed truth—joyful news—glorious Scri
 And is the God of Israel *thy* God, O my soul ?
 canst thou say, he has been so from the l
 Egypt, and truly do I believe “There is no G
 thee, and beside thee there is no Saviour.” (
 God, while bound by the bonds of Satan, in n
 land of Egyptian darkness, there should I ha
 mained, if thou hadst not been the Lord n
 from everlasting. Was not thy being broug
 of the darkness of Egypt, into the glorious
 light, the effect of thy God, thy Saviour’s love
 Lord, or I should never have tasted redeemi
 or known the power of thy grace. There is
 but the God of Israel ; there is no Savio
 Christ, the Son of the living God ; there
 teacher in the ways of holiness but the Holy
 —and these Three are One ; Jehovah, Israel’s
 Redeemer—Sanctifier ; the God revealed t
 Jesus Christ, by the Spirit’s power, quid
 enlightening, and setting apart.

Jesus ! all praise to sovereign grace !

From grace we enter glory ;

Then shall we see thy glorious face,

And cast our crowns before thee.

AY 18.—*That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*—HEB. vi. 12.

"In your patience possess ye your souls," were the words of the blessed Redeemer; and thou knowest the need, O Lord, thy people still have of the exhortation. Here are the words of the apostle, "be ye followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." This is precious encouragement to those who have their patience put into exercise. My soul, reflect, meditate on this—to inherit the promises! What are the promises? The great promise is, eternal life, procured by Jesus for his people, and they, through faith, lay hold of it, and in patience wait for it; and this eternal life was treasured up in the Son of God from all eternity. The first promise to the sinning parents, "Thy seed shall bruise the serpent's head," is verified in Christ Jesus; and the faithful, who are gone before, inherit that for which they longed—"They had no abiding city here, but were in faith looking for that city whose maker and ruler is God." Abraham saw the day of the Lord, though far off, and was glad. And are these promises far from thee, my soul? Oh, yes, yes! if thou "hast fled from refuge to the hope set before thee," and have cast no line anchor on the eternal Rock, which is both sure and steadfast, thy frail bark shall never founder without this anchor for thy soul; tempests may shatter, every after wave may pass over thee, quicksands and whirlpools affright thee; but "be not dismayed, I am with thee, O God," in patience possess ye your soul, and when the appointed time is come, thou shalt follow those who through faith and patience inherit the promises;

they looked, and thou must look, unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. "Glory to thee, O God Most High!"

MAY 19.—*But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you.*—1 JOHN ii. 27.

And what, my soul, can this anointing be, but that of the Holy Spirit—the "unction from the Holy One" (ver. 20)—the teaching of the Comforter which guideth into all truth; and what is this abiding, but confirmation of the blessed words of our Lord himself—"My sheep shall never perish"—"Abide in me, so shall ye bring forth much fruit?" Oh, it is most blessed to view the certainty of the Spirit's teaching; we need not that any man teach us, who are led by this Holy Teacher, who truly teacheth not as man teacheth—and *what man cannot teach*. No man can show his fellow man the depths of the iniquity of his heart; there is no power short of the Holy Spirit which can reveal the inward depravity, and bring the soul to a heart-felt humiliation before a holy God. And, O my soul, what cause for thankfulness to thy poor unstable nature, that this anointing shall abide "even as it hath taught you ye shall abide in him"—abide in him—in Jesus—little children (of grace) taught, by the anointing, "that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." Oh, that we may hail thee, thou glorious Redeemer, "Lord of all," rejoice in thy second coming, and, when thou appearest as the Judge of all the earth, we, thy Church, thy blood-bought family, through the teaching, anointing, abiding, indwelling of the Holy One, shall stand before

thee, and not be afraid—shall love thy appearing, to give us our crowns of righteousness, procured by thine own infinite holiness and merit—then shall we see all enemies finally conquered. Oh, blessed day! glorious victory of our all-conquering Jesus! Satan, sin, death, sickness, sorrow—all, all, for ever, overcome, and the Lord from heaven, the first-born from the dead of many brethren, shall reign with his saints gloriously. My soul, again shout, victory to the Lord God Omnipotent, who reigneth, and shall reign for ever and ever. Amen.

MAY 20.—*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, &c.*—

PSALM cxxi.

There is not one verse of this precious, holy, little song that my soul cannot read and re-read, with delight. If ancient Israel could realize such blessedness and such promises when travelling to their earthly Jerusalem, canst not thou, my soul, under the anointing revealed in thy last meditation, rejoice that thou art travelling, by degrees, to thy heavenly Jerusalem; and that thou hast, by this anointing, been taught from whom cometh thy help? Hath not thine eye of faith been led to look up to the eternal Rock? and canst thou realize the sweet, the blessed promises, that thy foot shall never be moved? And mark, O my soul, that behold—"Behold he that keepeth Israel"—yea, the spiritual as well as the temporal Israel, "shall neither slumber nor sleep." The Lord is thy keeper—thy shade—to preserve thee from all evil by night and by day; and, oh, more than all, he shall preserve thy soul! Precious words—blessed promises! and doubly blessed to realize the comfort, experimentally in the heart—truly to believe that the Lord shall

preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, for ever more—personally to feel the promise is to thee. O my soul, lift up thine eyes unto the hills—the Rock from whence cometh thine help! There is no other to be depended upon—the Lord alone is unchangeable—trust him at all times—his promises shall not fail—his purposes shall be accomplished; thy faith may fail, thy love wax cold, but Jehovah remain the same for ever—and Jesus is a High Priest ever—ever liveth to intercede—and his redeemer shall ever live with him in glory.

MAY 21.—*I will go in the strength of the Lord God
I will make mention of thy righteousness, even
thine only.*—PSALM lxxi. 16.

Happy, happy state for a sinning mortal to brought to! Oh, my soul, if thou dost realize that thou shalt never be confounded! Thou art cast down, dismayed, overcome, when thou art going and doing in thine own strength; but if thou canst say, at all times, under all circumstances, in all trials, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God," thou wilt have earthly things under thy feet. He that gives thee strength to make use of the promise, will also give thee strength to act upon it; and when thou hast found thine strength perfect weakness, thou shalt find that Lord God is perfect strength—infinite strength; when thou canst travel on in the strength of the Lord through this wilderness, every burden will be made light, every trial a joy, and everything that weans from earth, and gives thee nearer views of thy eternal rest, will be causes for praise and thanksgiving; sure thou art that no hope could abide of obtaining that rest, if thou couldst make mention of

righteousness but that of the Lord God; and this righteousness is that of God thy Father, given to thy naked soul through Jesus, his best-beloved and first-born; for mark well—thou, a sinful creature, from thy head to thy foot, polluted in thy ways, and prone to evil, art only seen by a holy God, as thou standest in Jesus. Grafted into that holy Vine, thou art a branch of righteousness, accepted in the Beloved, and made manifest to thyself and the world by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, by which alone the soul, dead in sin, can be quickened into life—a new life—and brought to believe in Jesus to the saving of the soul. Oh, for a sinner, a mortal man, whose heart is estranged from God's holy laws and ways, to plead any righteousness in himself for acceptance with God! Oh, it is monstrous! but not strange, for fallen man, who is born blind; and those have double sin who say, "We see," and yet remain blind to their own sin, and the needed righteousness of God. Oh, my soul, do thou stand in the strength of the Lord God, for no other strength will aught avail, neither will other righteousness serve thee when thou standest before a God of holiness. Jesus is made unto thee, of God, all, all, for time and eternity.

MAY 22.—*Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now, for a season, if needs be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations.*—1 PETER i. 6-9.

What a portion for thy meditation, my soul! Holy Spirit, help me to read, to think, to write, for the soul's profit, for without thy application all will be in vain; lead me to look up unto him from whom cometh my help, for this alone can enable the soul greatly to rejoice, *when under manifold temptations*. It is only

as we can view Jesus, "that the trial of faith becomes more precious than gold, though it be tried with fire, that it may be found unto honour, and praise, and glory at his appearing." My soul, canst thou say, whom having not seen you love—in whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, you rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory—hoping to receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your soul? To whom can we flee, at all times, but unto Jesus? and more especially are we driven to that eternal refuge under trials. To whom can we look, in whom hope, on whom rest, in whom rejoice, but in Jesus alone? Can the world, or self, or our fellow-man, give joy to the soul when faith is tried—yea, tried in the furnace? when if needs-be, bowed down with heaviness, it is Jesus alone, "whom, not having seen we love," that can speak peace and joy to the soul, under trials the world knows nothing of.

Blessed Lord, give me the faith to look entirely to thee! to rest on thee and thy finished work—thy immutable word—thy sovereign will—thy priestly office—thy adopting love—at all times; that I may believe thee when I have not a spiritual sight of thee, and rejoice in thee, praise and bless thee for trials, for which there is assuredly a needs-be, "seeing the end of my faith, even the salvation of my soul!"

MAY 23.—*I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety.*—
PSALM IV. 8.

In a two-fold sense am I led to see this text; in each my soul must acknowledge that the realizing originates in the faith—the precious faith, set forth in the last meditation; for whether it be the sleep of life,

or the sleep of death, a sinner can only find peace, and feel safety as the eye of faith is directed to the Lord Jesus, in whom only we see revealed the One Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts of ancient Israel—their keeper, who ever waketh to watch when his creatures are insensible to the dangers by which they are surrounded. Not only in the time of sleep, but with the natural eye open, multitudes pass through this life, as in asleep, unconscious of the manifold dangers around them, and insensible to the eye that never slumbereth nor sleepeth; and even the Lord's Israel are too unmindful of the *preventing* care of their God, and the continued watchfulness of his eye; but they do know, O Lord, that it is thou only that makest them dwell in safety, and through thee only can they lie down in peace, and sleep. Lord, grant to thy members, who have it not, a sweet realizing of thy continued presence, when lying down to sleep in time, or to sleep the sleep of death! Gracious Lord, grant to my soul this blessed reality of being sensible to the watchful eye which protects me by night and by day! Oh, that I may ever feel that it is the Lord that keepeth me in safety when I sleep! and when brought to the sleep of death it may not be an insensible peace, but that peace flowing from thyself to a broken-hearted sinner, to whom thou hast spoken peace, in mercy, by the blood of Jesus, which hath blotted out all sin, and arrayed the regenerated soul in his spotless robe, which neither sin nor death can destroy—this is the peace which will stand eternity, “for thou, Lord, *only* maketh me to dwell in safety.”

MAY 24.—*And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying, let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation.*—NUM. xxvii. 15, 16.

“And Moses spake unto the Lord!” What an example has the Church in this servant of the God of Israel under the law! Oh, my soul, would that thou spake oftener to the Lord! and that thou never took one step without seeking counsel from him! And how interesting is the request of Moses! his anxious concern to leave his people with a faithful leader, is well worthy of the imitation of the ministers and servants of God. But the New Testament Israel must look beyond and above an earthly guide to lead them; and, blessed be “the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh,” he hath provided a greater than Joshua, to bring them into the heavenly Canaan—he hath set a man indeed over the congregation, who will go in and out before them, lead them out, and bring them in, that they be not as sheep having no shepherd. Oh, it is a mercy for the congregation of the Lord to have the man Christ Jesus for their great and eternal Shepherd, who, being God as well as man, ever liveth to guide them through the wilderness, and over the Jordan, and gives them his Holy Spirit, to comfort and sustain them on the way. Oh, thou blessed Shepherd of thy sheep, keep us looking up to, and leaning on, thyself alone as our only Shepherd, following thy faithful Spirit-taught ministers, according as they follow thee and thy truth; send, if it be thy will, more of thy faithful gospel servants into the vineyard, true as thy law-servant, Moses, that they may often speak unto thee for their flock; and may the flock be led by thee to speak for thy under shepherds; and all shall be to the praise and glory of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Three Persons in One Eternal Jehovah!

—But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, yourselves in the love of God, looking for the of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.—
20, 21.

a precious transition, my soul, it is to pass from the law to the gospel—from shadows to substance—from Moses to Christ! the one typifying, the other fulfilling—the one showing the ministration of the law, which was glorious, the other that of the gospel, which far exceeded in glory—one, the lawgiver, the other the Law-fulfiller—one a faithful sermonizing, “Do this, and ye shall live,” the other the Son, the Heir, the Surety, the Husband, who even unto death for his Church, and for her sin, fulfilling the holy requirements of the law of Moses: the cross, crying, “It is finished.” The Spirit of God, saying, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” Oh, my soul, is not this attending admonition of “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ” Is not this our holy faith, to believe in the Lord Jesus, and that he is all-in-all? And mark the following words, “praying in the Holy Spirit, which, my soul, is the only effectual praying. The subject for meditation follows! “Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” This must be the constant aim, my soul—keeping thyself in the enjoyment of the blessedness of the love of God, watching for the coming of Jesus, which terminates in eternal life; to him must thou look, who is able to keep you from all falling, he who serves you faultless, the only wise God and Father, to whom be glory and majesty, dominion and power now and ever. Amen.

MAY 26.—*And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.*—2 CHRON. XX. 3, and following verses.

It is, my soul, very delightful to “*read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest*” the Holy Scriptures—to derive benefit therefrom in establishing the faith, and by warning or example striving to beware, or inciting to practise. Without a spiritual and practical benefit the word of God is only a dead letter, only furnishing the head with knowledge, and leaving the heart barren and unfruitful. Holy Spirit, help the meditation of this portion, for assuredly there is much for serious reflection, godly example, and soul comfort. What an example have we in the king of Judah! He greatly feared the vast multitude of enemies that was coming to invade his land, the land the Lord had given to his father Abraham, “thy friend,” he pleads. Does Jehoshaphat seek the counsel of man—does he send to Egypt for help, or even to his sister-kingdom Israel? No! he had the wisdom which is not of this world; he calls the men of Judah together, proclaims a fast, and sets himself “to seek the Lord;” and how touching and beautiful the supplication at the throne of his God, the King of kings! How he acknowledges his supremacy, his power, his former acts, and the impotence of the people—“We have no might, neither know we what to do; but our eyes are up unto thee.” Then follows the comfort from the Lord’s messenger, “Be not afraid nor dismayed at this great multitude, *for the battle is not yours, but God’s!*” Here is the result of trusting in the Lord, and seeking him. Nor was it a promise without a fulfilment—the words of God are “yea and amen”—the enemies were slain, and Judah shared the

spoils. Oh, my soul, thou must apply it spiritually! thy enemies, are they not as the hosts of Moab and Ammon? To overcome them thou must seek the Lord and his strength. Oh, praise him for mercies past—trust him for trials to come! and give him all the glory for all the conquests; and ever remember, in all thy victories, “the battle is not *yours*, but God’s.” Praise his glorious name!

MAY 27.—*Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and wear by his name. He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things which thine eyes have seen.*—DEUT. x. 20, 21.

It is one of the great privileges of the gospel that came by Jesus Christ, that a sinner can approach God with filial love, mixed with godly fear, having received the spirit of adoption, by the work of the Holy Spirit upon the soul; and I cannot but again view the distinction from the law given by Moses—and yet a sweet accordance; the one literal the other spiritual. To fear, and to serve, and to cleave to the Lord, through Jesus, is under a spirit of love whose service is freedom, and communion a high privilege, and no longer a mere duty; and most sweetly, my soul, canst thou, by Jesus Christ, rehearse the words of Moses, “He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.” Yes, and the heart has felt, too, the great things done for a sinner; Jesus, thy praise and thy God, who only can pardon, who only could atone; and praise, through an eternity, must be to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen, Amen.*

MAY 28.—*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is g*

PHILIPPIANS i. 21.

There can be but one more blessed state than frame of mind which dictated these words of apostle—dictated and influenced, we would say, the Holy Spirit. What a blessed state of experience indeed, to say from the heart, “For me to live Christ, and to die is gain!”

The apostle not only *said*, but *did*, and suffer he lived Christ—he preached Christ—he followed Christ—he gloried in Christ—he counted all of knowledge but dross and dung—and he could do things through Christ strengthening him; and not this, my soul a blessed state for mortal man attain unto? and yet Paul could see, by the eye of faith, a far more blessed state; and, to him, more desirable. We can scarcely fancy a more happy position than to live, Christ-like, dead to this world and all its dying vanities—to be heavenly-minded, keeping the flesh in subjection to the Spirit, walking in the spirit of love. But Paul believed “to die was gain”—far better to depart and be with Christ. Happy experience! Surely Paul must have felt the highest state of felicity this earth can offer to a sinning son of Adam; to have the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart—to be so highly honoured in his Master’s cause—to be crucified for the world, and yet to feel that “to die was gain.” What could cause the apostle thus to feel? His own words testify to the mind that was in him. First, he felt truly that he was in a body of flesh and death, which made him cry, “Oh, wretched creature that I am!” and then he looked forward to that one far happier state, where, through Jesus Christ,

his Lord, he expected to have a glorious body, a crown of glory, and to dwell for ever with his adorable Lord, free from sin and every earthly clog.

Oh, happy, happy state !

To leave for ever a poor sinning clod,
To dwell for ever with a holy God ;
To leave for ever earth's polluted things ;
To reign for ever with the King of kings !

MAY 29.—*My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.*—PSALM lxii. 5, and three following verses.

My soul, read over and over these words of the Psalmist, and question thyself whether it be thy experience ; meditate upon them and ask the Holy Spirit to apply them with his quickening power, so that thou mayest *feel* and *profit*, by *really* meditating. To wait only upon God—to have thy expectation upon him—he only to be thy rock and salvation, thy defence, so that thou shalt not be moved ; in God, thy salvation and glory ; thy rock and the strength of thy refuge to be in God—to trust in him at all times—to pour out your heart before him, for God is a refuge for us. What can be added to this ? Pages might be written upon each sentence, without application or profit ; while, meditating upon these inspired words of the Psalmist, with application to the soul by the same heavenly Teacher, may bring profit, comfort, strength, faith, hope, love, peace, joy, and numberless spiritual blessings, which cannot be enumerated, while led to view, in the God of Israel, David's hope, expectation, and Rock—God made manifest in the flesh—that holy thing born of a woman, yet without sin—of the seed of David, yet David's Lord. Here the sinner can look with confidence on a holy God—

in Jesus his expectation and hope are complete. Deity, veiled in the manhood of Jesus, reconciles the sinner to God, brings in an everlasting righteousness, and, by the power of the spirit of adoption, shows the sinner his salvation and glory in Jesus Christ our Lord. Oh, my soul, here is thy only refuge! Trust in him at all times thou mayest, but in none of his creatures—trust in him for ever, he is thy sure refuge—pour out thy heart before him, he will hear the cry of the destitute—he will not turn away from the voice of thy supplication. Ah, thou dost not trust him enough; he is ever willing to hear, but thou art not always willing to ask, nor faithful to trust, nor ready to pour out thy heart before him.

Blessed Lord, help the weakness of thine imperfect creature, by thy Spirit! cause me to trust thee at all times—in life, in death, for life, and immortality; for grace to overcome here, and for eternal glory in “our house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Amen.

MAY 30.—*Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul.*—JOB iii. 20, and following verses.

It is most blessed to be able to distinguish between nature and grace—to behold the ways of the Lord with a spiritual eye. The spirit of grace is directly opposed to nature; the gracious soul will cry aloud, under spiritual trials, somewhat different from Job under his temporal trials, who was arguing according to the flesh, and not after the Spirit. Oh, my soul, what answer canst thou give to this exclamation of Job, who was looking at natural light and life? But thou must take it spiritually, and then thou wilt see

that it is to the miserable that life is given, to make them happy, and "light to the bitter in soul," that they may see the atoning blood of Jesus, which speaks peace to the conscience, and comfort to the distressed. Oh, the griefs and the moanings of nature ! but grace puts away the whys and the wherefores, when misery has been turned into joy, and eternal life is seen in Jesus, and a glorious light in the face of a Mediator, which can never be put out. Death is not sought, but waited for ; and praises to God who has blessedly hedged in the saints, that they are safe from the "wild boar and roaring lion." The only desire grace has for the grave is, that the soul may be with Christ, and that the Lord's will may be done. My soul, thou dost not wish for "safety," or "rest, or "quiet, out of Jesus, but *in him* only ; and trouble, thou knowest, thy Lord said his people should have in this world ; but, blessed be his name, peace in himself he promised ! so lay thine hand upon thy mouth, to which Job was brought, and bless and praise the God of all thy mercies—the God of thy salvation, in whose hands thou art desirous to leave thyself, body, soul, and spirit—for him to send thy poor corrupt body to the grave in his own time, when thy released spirit shall through grace, inherit the kingdom prepared by thine adorable Redeemer, for all his seed.

Oh, for grace to be willing to wait his time, and to be ready at a moment's warning, to enter the valley of death, fearing no evil, if Jesus be with thee, to uphold, strengthen, comfort ! To thee, O Lord, be all the praise, for ever and ever !

MAY 31.—*Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto may continually resort : thou hast given commandment to save me ; for thou art my rock and my fortress.*—PSALM lxxi. 3.

What comforting words are these to the believing soul—the sin-stricken soul ! Lord Jesus, as a *sinner* my eyes must be up unto *thee*, and to have peace must *feel* that “thou art my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort.” Lord, thou art a habitation for thy people, and a strong one too; thou art a hiding-place from evil, moral and physical, of this life; thy strength is infinite, and a strong habitation in truth thou art, to every naked soul, in a wearied land, that has fled to this refuge, and has been brought under the shadow of thy wings: and, my soul, *perceive this*, “whereunto we *may continually resort*. There is every privilege, every blessing, treasured up in Christ our Lord; he is ever ready to assist and succour those who call upon him, though he does not answer according to the *desires* of his people, but as they ask in accordance with his own infinite wisdom and irreversable will. If we do not “*continually resort*” to Jesus, under all trials and temptations, we are hindered by the flesh, or the devil, and the sin of unbelief makes us run from Jesus, instead of resorting to him. “Thou hast given commandment to save me for thou art my rock and my fortress.” Canst thou not, my soul, look at the everlasting covenant—the promises which are yea and amen in Jesus—the finished work of redemption—the hourly, daily, yea, eternal salvation, through the Son of God, the holy undefiled Jesus—and truly say, “THOU art my rock and my fortress;” yea, my all, for every moment of time, “whereunto I may continually resort.” And

he must be thy only refuge for an eternity, or thou shalt be eternally cast out of his presence; the rocks and hills shall be no resort—they shall not hide thee when Jesus comes in his glory, for to HIM only canst thou resort, to be eternally saved. Even so, Lord Jesus.

JUNE.

JUNE 1.—*Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?*—ISAIAH ii. 22.

Lord! I would cease from all but thyself; from every creature dependence, independent of thee. I would “cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils,” if he were not guided by thy Spirit, and constrained by thy love. I would cease from every earthly hope, or joy, or peace, if thou, O my Lord and my God, did not constitute the foundation of all: “for wherein is man to be accounted of,” independent of thee, Creator, Preserver, Redeemer? Man, as a flower of the field, flourisheth for a moment, and is gone; then where is creature-peace and joy? But the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting; and, resting thy all of hope on him, thy peace and joy shall endure when all things appear against thee. Thou, Lord, must work all within us; it must be thy power to help us to “cease from man,” and enable us to give all the glory, all the praise, to thee, our God in Christ Jesus.

JUNE 2.—*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*—PHILIPPIANS iv. 19.

What doth my soul say to this blessed promise,

following thy last meditation? Doth it not more fully tell thee to "cease from man?" Yes, all thy *need* shall be supplied; but not all thy *desires*, for thy heavenly Father well knoweth thou hast desires of the flesh which are earthly, insatiable, unprofitable—namely, more, would be most injurious, if granted; therefore thy God will only supply thy *need* according, O my soul, to his riches in glory, and by Christ Jesus. Wilt thou mayest thou cease from man; in Jesus all thy *need* shall be (*is*) supplied. Oh! eternity must reveal the riches of glory, which time cannot unfold, out of which thy present need is supplied. If Jesus be thy God, then shalt thou have all thy *need*; yes, all thy *need* by Christ Jesus, according to his riches in glory. And what is thy need? Thy greatest need is the salvation of thy soul; and this, indeed, is richly provided for *by*, and *in* Christ Jesus. What canst thou comprehend, my soul, of "his riches in glory"? Thou must drop thy clay tabernacle, and see him without the veil of flesh, before his glory can be revealed, comprehended, or enjoyed. "Glory ye his holy name, let the hearts of them rejoice that seek the Lord."

JUNE 3.—*If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, Lord, who shall stand?*—PSALM CXXX. 3-7.

Man's iniquity—the Lord's forbearance; the soul waiting—the soul watching—the soul hoping—are all and each, most beautifully set forth in these verses of this little song of degrees. Ah, what mortal man shall stand, if the Lord mark iniquities? Not one of Adam's fallen race. But there is forgiveness with thee; and man is brought to fear thee with a godly fear, and love thee with a holy love, when sovereign grace reveals sin, and sin drives the condemned soul to Jesus (see

drives and love *draws*)—then, then doth the soul wait for the Lord, and hope in his word; yea, wait for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning, “*I say, more than they that watch for the morning.*” How emphatic the repetition! “Let Israel hope in the Lord”—for why?—for with him is mercy and *plenteous redemption*—mercy for the most rebellious—plenteous redemption for the chief of sinners.

Jesus came to give life to his sheep—yea, that they might have it more abundantly. Oh then, my soul, if thou hast attained unto this plenteous redemption, it is all in Jesus; if the Lord doth not mark thine iniquities, it is because thou hast found forgiveness in Jesus. Oh, then, wait continually for the Lord, and hope in his word! wait on him for the manifestations of his love—wait on him for the subdual of flesh—yea, as those who watch for the morning; and those who really watch for the morning, is it not with hope, anxiety, expectation, intense desire to catch the first gleam of returning day? Oh, for faith’s eye to be ever on Jesus! He may, for a season, “*if needs be,*” hide himself behind a cloud; then “watch, I say, more than they that watch for the morning,” for he is the same for ever; he faithfully carries on the work in the hearts of his redeemed, by the power of the Holy Spirit; and however changeable man may be, Jesus is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever. Let the redeemed sinner give praise to Jehovah, Three Persons in One immutable God.

JUNE 4.—*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*—JOHN vi. 37.

Here, my soul, is another assertion of thy blessed

Redeemer, which all the craft of the powers
 ness can neither deny nor gainsay, though
 and enmity may pervert: and here is a prom
 which can neither be fully appreciated nor
 but by those who "*know* their election o
 What a blessed reflection! to be assured that
 of the redeemed shall perish—that *all* t
 Father (in his inscrutable ways and unerring
 has given to the Son (in the councils of e
shall come to him; therefore whosoever
 (drawn by the Father, verse 44) shall in no
 cast out. No, precious, precious Lord Jesu
 will not cast from thee the poor naked soul
 ready to perish—that crieth unto thee for
 that cometh to the foot of thy cross—that
 to thy precious blood, which cleanseth from
 All that are given by the Father are drawn
 Father, and such Jesus will in no wise cast o
 he will raise them up at the last day.

"We crown thee Lord of all."

JUNE 5.—*The hands of Zerubbabel have l
 foundation of this house; his hands shall als
 it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of ho
 sent me unto you.*—ZECHARIAH iv. 9.

"Faith is the gift of God;" and great ind
 the faith of the prophet of the Lord, spea
 "he was moved by the Holy Ghost." "Moreo
 word of the Lord came unto me saying." H
 no doubts nor ifs; and there is no question th
 he was thus led to speak, he believed would c
 pass. Let us pause a moment on this wondro
 and then pass on to the prophecy, which c
 much more for meditation than at a casual

we might imagine. The gift of faith is not confined to prophesying; and, blessed be the God of all gifts, he portions out to each of his children that which is most for their profit and his glory. Faith's eye here spies the centre of all the sinner's hope—looks beyond the earthly house, and mortal Zerubabel, to view him who laid the foundation of the heavenly Jerusalem, and whose almighty hands shall also finish it. But let us look at it literally, we shall see the wonderful works of the Lord. Instruments were raised to rebuild the dilapidated Jerusalem, made desolate by the enemies of the Lord of Hosts—by him permitted for the sins, the crying sins of his chosen, his peculiar people. The holy temple had been rifled of its holy vessels, and much destroyed, which never could be restored; but a second temple must be erected, and though less in splendour, it exceeded the first in glory, for it was to receive Deity veiled in flesh—it was rebuilt to receive Jesus, the Son of God and man—the Fulfiller of the law—the one great and all-sufficient sacrifice, who is the head stone of the spiritual temple, to whom, my soul, shout, “Grace, grace unto it.”

JUNE 6.—*Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do you see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts.*—HAGGAI ii. 3, 9.

An unpremeditated connection with the former text again presents itself—a confirmation, also, of the lead-

ing of the mind—of the glory that was to be revealed in *this house*, independent of outward splendour.

All our meditations derive their profit by contemplating, with the Spirit's application, under every varied form, "the *desire* of all nations," who was the hope of the *first sinner*, and must be that of the *last*. The splendour of Solomon's temple—the thousands, and tens of thousands of sacrifices—what is it all to a Spirit-taught sinner—a heart broken by the just and holy law of God—it is "as nothing" in the eyes of such; while the glory which appeared in the second temple is dear to their soul, and precious in their eyes; that glory which brought peace by the blood of the cross speaketh better things than the law, given by Moses, or the sacrifices of beasts, or all the magnificence of Solomon or his temple, for "a greater than Solomon was here," who came to cleanse the pollutions of the earthly temple—make an end of sacrifices, by the offering of himself—fulfil the law for righteousness, being the end of the law to every one that believeth—rend the veil of the temple, and enter the holy of holies, to make continual intercession for all his blood-bought family.

Blessed Lord! in great humility thou sojourned here on earth; thy manifestive glory was laid by, but the *power* of the Godhead was acknowledged by those whose hearts were not hardened by unbelief; the glory thou wilt reveal at thy second coming, "eye hath not seen, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," when thou comest to reign with thy saints gloriously. Of the heavenly Jerusalem thou art the glory and the light thereof.

JUNE 7.—*And I said, Oh, that I had wings like a dove! for then would I flee away, and be at rest.*—Ps. lv. 6.

Oh, how often are we led (for surely the same Spirit teacheth the same lesson), when under trial, to cry out, with David, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! for then I would flee away and be at rest." When trials abound, creature help fails, earthly comforts few, idols are taken away, and perhaps prove broken reeds—then, how apt are we to crave the wings of the dove, to fly to our everlasting rest—our house above! But when the path is smooth, and we "go softly," earthly consolations abound, and eternal glory is seen in the distance, as a sure winding up at the end—then are we satisfied with our nest below—then are we willing to wait the Lord's time—then are our wings clipped, and we glide on smoothly upon earth; but let the tempest come, sweeping away the desire of our eyes—then we cry, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove!" then would I flee away to my beloved Lord, where I shall know sorrow no more; I would flee from my earthly burdens, to be at rest; I would flee from the trials which oppress me, to be with Christ, which is far better. But let the soft and fascinating cords of nature bind us to an earthly idol—let peace be in our dwelling, and ease encircle us, health of body and prosperity of soul, walking to heaven, hand-in-hand with those we love; with Jesus, the One on whom we depend, to whom we press on—yet are we held to earth—the present joys are ours, and we would sip the earthly cup till we had drained it to the last drop; but no! love earth too much, thy Father sends his messengers to warn, to wean, to draw thee to himself. Lord, all must be given up.

for thee—earthly joy, as well as earthly woe; ~~we~~ cannot rest *in* earth, when Jesus has purchased ~~and~~ prepared a heaven in himself alone. Oh, for ~~the~~ wings of faith, to keep me close to thee, O Lord! with these to fly to thee at all times, and wait with patience thine appointed hour to call me to my heavenly rest, without the aid of earthly wings. In thee, O Jesus, is my only trust !

JUNE 8.—*A reproof entereth more into a wise man than a hundred stripes into a fool.*—PROV. xvii. 10.

The Scriptures point out two classes of persons, the righteous and the wicked—the one class ripening for heaven—the other for hell; and such are distinguished as the wise and the foolish—the one receives the reproof of the Spirit—the other remains hardened to the end; thus, “A reproof entereth more into a wise man than a hundred stripes into a fool.” One gospel is proclaimed—one Jesus set forth, as the only way to eternal life—the same peace to any that come—the same denunciations of wrath to all that do not; the same word reaches the ear of two persons, dead in trespasses and sins—the reproof entereth into the heart of one, and he becometh wise unto salvation—it reaches no farther than the ear of the other, and he remains a fool till he finds it too late to become wise. Reproof upon reproof—warning after warning reaches his ear, yet he remains deaf, and blind, and indifferent to all—a hundred stripes reach not his heart; and why? Holy Spirit, thine the office to convince of sin, to break the stony heart, to regenerate the soul: and without thy work man *will not* come to Jesus to be saved; but to all who come to *him*, by thee, he gives eternal life.

VE 9.—*And this he said to prove him ; for he himself knew what he would do.*—JOHN vi. 6.

My soul, thou dost see, in this text, the dealings of Lord with his people, and his own great power infinite knowledge. Thou art experimentally assured that the Lord hath done many things “to prove thee,” and thou canst not doubt that “he himself knew what he would do.” He sends trials to prove thee—darkness of soul to prove thee—permits Satan to tempt to prove thee—leaves thee to flesh, self, thine own evil heart and wayward will, to prove thee—all, all to prove thy faith in, and thy love to thy sovereign Lord, and rightful Master. “But he knoweth what he will do.” Philip, in answer to the Lord’s question, says, “Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them,” as if he despaired of the multitude being quieted ; but Jesus performs a miracle, to feed them with the bread of this world, and sends them away. “The multitude followed Jesus because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased.” They were satisfied with the food for their mortal bodies ; and though they said, “This is not a truth that prophet,” and wanted to make him deny, they did not ask for that bread of life which only he alone could give. But he manifested his Almighty power to the gazing multitude and his adorning principles ; and he will perfect that which concerneth his people—correct them for their profit, chastise them in love, prove them in whatever way he pleaseth, and finally bring them to glory.

VE 10.—*My dove, my undefiled is but one.*—

SOLOMON’S SONG vi. 9.

It is a most blessed view, to see the oneness of the

Church, and the love of Christ to his church—his mystical body—"his dove, his undefiled"—for whom he shed his blood, to cleanse her from all sin—whom he has clothed in his own perfect righteousness, to present her "faultless at his Father's throne." It is a blessed union with Head and members—a oneness—a fulness—a completeness—all settled independent of those for whom such blessings have been wrought; the Father has given to the Son—the Son has redeemed all that are given—the Holy Ghost shall quicken all that are redeemed. Christ's body is perfect, the members complete in number, undefiled in the sight of the Father, and shall inherit the kingdom prepared by Jesus before the foundation of the world. Ye people, praise ye the Lord.

JUNE 11.—*That he might present it to himself a glorious Church.*—EPH. v. 27.

My soul, thou art again led into a delightful connection with the Old Testament and the New—the apostle in the one confirming the prophet in the other; Christ and his Church is the theme of each—the one speaking in figure, the other literally. Although those who died in faith, expecting him who was to come, are equally blessed in glory, yet blessed are we under the new dispensation, for we see what the fathers prophesied of—we have the substance, they had only the shadows—they had the law by which to live, which proved a letter of condemnation—we have "Christ, the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe," so that "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh (which profiteth nothing), but after the Spirit," which

quickeneth; "The letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive." Christ brake down the barrier between Jew and Gentile—opened the gate of righteousness—so loved his Church, "his dove, his undefiled," as to give himself to die for her—"to sanctify and cleanse it, to present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, but to be holy, and without blemish." Thus, he loved his Church from everlasting—has completely justified her; and the just shall live by faith in the Son of God—every member shall be quickened by the Spirit,—not *one* can be left out—Grace paves the way to glory, and Jesus has prepared and procured for his bride what the angels desire to look into—salvation from sin, pardon of all iniquity, and life everlasting; sinners dead in sin made alive, brought to repentance with a broken heart and in a contrite spirit, to forsake sin and walk in the way of holiness, looking unto Jesus, the object of their hope and love. Oh, my soul, rejoice,—rejoice in in the Lord! give unto Jesus (the only Mediator) the honour due unto him; praise him for his work of love, and glorify the God of thy salvation. Amen.

JUNE 12.—*Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time, that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.*—ISAIAH xlviii. 8.

Meditate, my soul, over this Scripture, and thou wilt certainly perceive that it cannot be confined to the literal Israel; is it not applicable to the spiritual Israel, the Church of Christ, his own mystical body, "ordained before the foundation of the world, and

to every individual member of that body? Yea, trace thine own life from the womb, and art thou not sure the Lord may speak to *thee* in the same language that he spake to the Church of old? "Yea, thou heardest not, thou knewest not; from that time thine ear was not opened, for I knew thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb." Dost thou not remember when thou wert spiritually deaf and blind, without knowledge? and did not the Lord know all concerning thee? and art thou not very certain thou wert a transgressor from the womb? Oh, grace, grace! that has spared Jacob, has saved Israel, pardoned rebels, sanctified the unholy, justified sinners, brought back the treacherous, restored transgressors, and saved them freely!

JUNE 13.—*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.*—ISAIAH xxvi. 3.

Here is a truth uttered by the heaven-inspired prophet, to which every heaven-born soul must surely set to their seal. Some may exclaim, "Ah, but I am not in perfect peace." Thy mind, then, is *not* stayed upon the Lord, because thou dost *not* trust in him; for it is as certain as that the word of God is true, that the Lord will keep them in *perfect peace* whose minds are *stayed* upon him. All fear, distress, vexing, wishing, restlessness, pining, impatience, rebellion, &c., are the offsprings of flesh, and keep the mind from perfect peace; but to be stayed upon the Lord quiets all the fleshy progeny, and keeps the mind in perfect peace. Yes, my soul, peace when under trials—when all things appear against thee; then is the trial of thy

faith and trust in the Lord; then does the Lord manifest himself as thy great Deliverer; but when we do not trust him, we are driven about with every puff that is against us, tossed to and fro, cast down at every trial, fretful with every trifle—anything and everything but acting under the influence of the blessed admonition in the succeeding verse, “Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.” Holy Spirit, apply these words with power unto my soul—not only to *believe*, but help me to realize them continually, so that I may not be overcome by the numerous enemies “which hurt and assault the soul.” *For ever* is the Lord to be trusted, and in him is *everlasting* strength! Oh, the immutability of Jehovah! the blessedness of Scripture promises, when the Comforter “takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us!” Lord, our eyes are up unto thee; keep our hearts with thee, and then assuredly we shall be ever trusting *thee* and thy strength, O Lord Jehovah.

JUNE 14.—*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.*—1 COR. x. 13.

How frequently do we fancy that our own trials and temptations are greater than those of our brethren, and that they differ in quality as well as degree; but what saith the apostle? “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.” And what is the cheering promise added? “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will make a way to escape.” Precious Lord, thy word is faithfulness itself; and most true it is, that thou givest all things needful for thy children. *When weak in themselves* then are they most strong

in *thee*; when ready to faint thou bearest them on eagle's wings; when passing through the waters thou art with them; when in the fire they shall not be consumed, for thou art there—they shall be tried, but not destroyed—purged, to bring forth fruit to thy glory and thy praise, O Lord.

JUNE 15.—*Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help.*—PSALM xxii. 11.

This pathetic appeal may surely be the cry of believers, when, like the glorious head of the Church, "they are in heaviness through manifold temptations." This Psalm is evidently prophetic of the experience of the Lord Jesus, when under the sufferings he passed through in his human nature, when the power of the Godhead was withdrawn, and the malice of men and devils was let loose upon him. If the head endured such agonies for sinful man, well may the members be content to bear their light afflictions. "Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help." Has not this been the cry of many poor afflicted believers? has not this ardent supplication issued from the *heart* of the tried members of the mystical body, the spiritual Israel? And who, in times of trouble, can help as the Lord? who, like the Lord, ever near to help? We look in vain, on the right and on the left, and "there is none to help." Often, in times of trouble, man withdraws; and sometimes "vain is the help of man." There can be neither comfort nor help but from the Lord, as there is none *to* help, neither is there any that *can* help. My soul, look then alone unto the God of thy continual salvation! Let thy prayer be unceasingly, "*Be not far from me!*" yea, at all times, whether in

or out of trouble, thou dost still require thy
 to be near—thou dost still want the supporting
 the watchful eye of Omnipotence, to keep thee
 I preserve thee from evil at all times.

holy Jesus suffered for the sins of his people—
 just for the unjust”—the holy for the unholy—
 less for the sinful; he bore the scoffs and revil-
 men without a murmur, whilst thou, my soul,
 t down, and full of rebellion, at mere trifles.
 y clay tabernacle is of the earth, earthy—Jesus
 Lord from heaven; thou art all weakness—he
 trength, and all thy glory is that Jesus is “all
 vation, and all thy desire.”

16.—*Woe unto them that are wise in their own
 and prudent in their own sight!*—ISAIAH v. 21.
 many are the woes pronounced in Scripture!
 soul, canst thou search thy heart to see if
 rt wise in thine own eyes? If thou art, thou
 ot come, poor, and blind, and naked, to Jesus;
 lent in thine own sight, thou art not come “up
 he wilderness leaning on thy Beloved”—nor art
 made perfect in weakness, that thou mayest be
 in the Lord—nor hast thou been taught by
 ly Spirit that Jesus came to call sinners to re-
 ce, and to rescue such as be of a contrite spirit
 oken heart. Lord, I confess myself to be a
 from the very depth of my heart, and that I
 othing but what thou bestoweth. The wisdom
 is foolishness with *thee*; and woe unto him
 riveth with his Maker! Woe unto them which
 ood evil and evil good, light darkness and
 as light! Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees,
 rites, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

Woe, woe, woe unto you who choose the evil and reject the good! who are wise in the wisdom of this world, but ignorant of the foolishness of the cross! Woe unto you who deny the sovereignty of the Spirit, and the necessity of a new birth! Woe unto you who are wise in your own eyes, so that ye cannot spiritually see spiritual things; are prudent in your own sight, so that ye need not the garment of salvation, the spotless robe of Jesus, to hide your filthy rags from the pure eyes of Jehovah! Woe unto all who are not in the true Vine, who are not of the Father's planting! Jesus crucified was to the Greeks foolishness, and to the Jews a stumbling-block; but, to them that are saved, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

JUNE 17.—*Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty.*

1 CHRON. xxix. 11, and following verses.

My soul, read again and again these words of the King of Judah *especially*—the King of all Israel collectively—the chosen of God—the man after God's heart—the head of the royal seed—the progenitor of the promised Messiah—he who was David's Lord, yet David's offspring; say, what but Divine inspiration could break forth in such exalted strains, such magnificent aspirations to the great God. Read, I say, these words attentively, and if thou art not lifted up with holy fervour, there is surely a lack of the Spirit's application. But what does David say? Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? "*for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.*" Here is the whole mystery. The Lord himself must sanctify the offering by his Spirit, to render it acceptable; the

same Spirit must apply to the soul the precious words of Scripture, to make them profitable—all that goes to the Lord must come *from* the Lord, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift; and he alone can make his people serve him willingly, or offer the sacrifice of a willing heart, made so in the day of his power.

To God, the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, be all the praise, for ever and ever! Nothing can be added by mortal pen to the words of David, for if thy heart be not warmed, thy soul raised heaven-ward, to see, by faith, the glory, the majesty, the greatness, the power of the God of Israel, the Divine dew of the Spirit resteth not upon thee, which alone can bestow a heavenly savour.

JUNE 18.—*And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness.*—ACTS xiii. 18.

Holy Spirit, I pray thee to make a self-application of these words unto my soul, that I may profit thereby! See here a type of the Church of Christ, and, in the rebellious Israelites, a figure of every member; and canst thou see *thyself*? Did not the Lord suffer *thy* manners for more than forty years? And does he not suffer the manners of all the seed during the time they remain spiritually dead? And has he not to suffer with their—with thy—manners after being brought into the kingdom of grace? Down, down, with self to the very dust, before thy Lord, and let Jesus be highly extolled for the great things he hath done for a rebellious people. If the Lord deal with thee according to thy merit, thou art eternally lost; if thou presumest to come before him, in thy sins or thy righteousness, thy sentence will be, "Depart

from me ye cursed!" Lord, this I believe, therefore come I naked unto thee for thy glorious garment of salvation; that I may stand before thee as my Judge, and plead thy blood, thy righteousness alone. Be deeply humbled, my soul, with the forbearing sufferance of a holy God, to whom thou canst approach only through a Mediator. The eye of faith must look unto Jesus as the sin-atonement Lamb, the justifying God. Oh, for the Spirit's help, to crave his forbearance, and to come a needy beggar to the throne of grace, where Jesus stands to plead thy self-renouncing cause, by virtue of his precious blood, which cleanseth from all sin; and all-sufficient merit, which stops all creature-boasting, and gives him all the praise.

JUNE 19.—*And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?*—MARK IV. 40.

We now come, as it were, into the presence of our Lord, in the relation of the events which occurred when he tabernacled upon earth: we see him in his human nature sleeping as man; we hear the storm roaring—the waves beating into the ship, so that it was nearly filled; we see the terrified disciples at "their wit's-end," judging by sight—faith given to the winds, and awaking their Lord with something like a rebuke on their lips. Jesus waits not for a second call—he arises, and, with the power of Deity, says, "Peace, be still!" Here we see the God—"The winds and the waves obey him." What says he to his fearful disciples? does he rebuke them with anger—upbraid them for their unbelief? Hear his own words, "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" Here was neither anger

nor rebuke, but an affectionate appeal, seemingly sorrowing for the predominancy of unbelief.

What would my soul answer were the question put to thee? Lord, thou knowest the weakness and timidity of thy disciples, that they are still in the flesh, and that it must be thine own power to give the faith which can move the mountains of unbelief, and quiet the storms and tempests of fearfulness and trembling, when danger is near. We are fearful, Lord, because we are weak; we have no faith, unless thou bestow it; and often, very often, we receive not because we ask not. Thy drowsy disciples were once warned by thine own voice, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." And again, an affectionate appeal, "What! could ye not watch with me one hour?" and a merciful excuse for their slumbering, instead of watching, "Truly the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Blessed Jesus! thou art all-in-all to thy people.

JUNE 20.—*And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of waters in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*—ISAIAH xxxii. 2.

A MAN be a hiding place from the storm—a covert, from the tempest—as rivers of waters in a dry place—the shadow of a great rock in a weary land? Yea, this is the declaration of Scripture, and truly is it the neediness of the sinner. Can a guilty rebel, a polluted creature, dare approach the infinite holiness of Jehovah? Can justicespare the guilty? Can a fallen son of Adam, who is filled with his own ways, face God as his Judge, and live? Never, never! Then, O my soul, the infinite love and mercy of a gracious

God. A body was prepared, in which Deity should dwell, and the MAN Christ Jesus became, in time what he was ordained unto from everlasting—a hiding place for the guilty—a covert for the polluted—living waters to the dead—a rock immovable for the weary the heavy laden to rest upon—a Man to suffer for our sins, to *feel* our infirmities—a God to heal and cover all.

JUNE 21.—*Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.*—PSALM lxxiii. 24 and two following verses.

My soul, what a blessed portion of Scripture for thy meditation! The first verse *must* be accomplished in every heir of salvation, whether they realize it or not. Yes, my God, we are privileged to say with the Psalmist, “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.” What a precious exercise of faith! What is wanted more, for time and eternity? *Nothing!* To be guided by the Lord is our chief good on earth—to be received to glory our bliss hereafter. My soul, how blessedly and fully hast thou realized the next verse, in times past! with what unction, what sweetness, did it flow into thy soul, as absorb every earthly desire and feeling! but, blessed be thy name, I am persuaded I have “none in heaven but *thee*,” to this day, for faith holds on, though sight be lost: and surely there can be “none upon earth but desired in comparison to thee.” But the next verse sums up the experience of faith—the blessed exercise of it—which I pray the Holy Spirit to apply continually to my poor, unstable mind. How truly do we say, “My flesh and my heart faileth;” and if they will, to the last, of themselves; the flesh is weak

prone to evil—"The *heart deceitful* above all
 gs;" and no marvel that they fail. But, precious
 h—blessed words! when faith takes hold, and the
 feels the sweetness and reality of believing that
 od is the strength of my heart, and my *portion for*
 ." Here is strength made perfect in weakness,
 the fainting soul becomes more than conqueror,
 ough Jesus Christ our Lord.

Who can the flesh and heart control?
 But hope, that anchor of the soul,
 Looks up to Jesus, that great Rock,
 The strength of all his ransom'd flock;
 And faith holds on, though flesh give way,
 For Jesu's strength shall gain the day;
 And naught thy love from us can sever,
 For thou our portion art, *for ever!*

22.—*And she said, If I may touch but his clothes,
 shall be whole.*—MARK v. 26.

What a precious act of faith is here recorded! and
 it a blessed result! Here is not only an act of
 h, but faith's action. Faith, brought into action,
 gs forth fruit—"If I might touch but his clothes,
 all be whole," cries faith: but would this poor
 ased one have been healed if she had drawn
 t? Oh, no! though faith may credit the power of
 us, yet, if unbelief keep from the touch, there will
 o healing. In that lay the faith—"If I may but
 t;" the touch brought virtue out of him who hath
 er to "heal *all our diseases.*" "Draw me, and I
 run after thee," says the Church. "My sheep
 v my voice, and they follow me," says our Lord.
 use of want gives boldness; nothing shall keep
 soul back from pressing forward to Jesus who is
 ght to a feeling sense of utter helplessness, and

of incurable disease by any other means; in may keep Jesus, for a time, from view, but still is, "If I may but touch," I shall be who am not whole until I have touched—if but th his garment. Perseverance presses on—faith touches Jesus, and, of *necessity*, virtue flows to heal; for whosoever *cometh* he will in no out. Deliverance being realized, through sistible touch, what is the soul's next act? the feet of Jesus, and tells him all the truth out the heart-cry unto him who hath done such things—and hears the blessed voice, "Go in thou art healed of thy plague." Oh, my soul hast passed this precious experience—hast plague of sin—hast been led to Jesus—touch garment, and realized its healing virtue; has whispered peace, and thou hast cast thy foot of the cross in wonder, that a sinner—sinner—should be brought there. Let love an O Lord, fill my heart! and let me daily touch *pure* garment, to realize the healing power sin, and the continual dying to the flesh, as to the Spirit. Amen.

JUNE 23.—*For they all saw him, and were And immediately he talked with them, and said them, Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid.* vi. 50.

Unbelief troubles the soul, when nature comprehend what it sees; but Jesus speaks: ascension to the weakness of poor human nature voice assures where sight had failed—he feels firmities of his people, sees their trouble, does but immediately talked with them. There

anger think they see a vision, but the reality, the blessed reality, bursts in upon their souls, and they are sore amazed, for the heart is so hardened, that though one miracle be wrought, unbelief doubts the next. Oh ! that "Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid," spoken to the ear of faith, applied to the heart, realized in the soul, is sweet and precious indeed. When Jesus comes, and speaks, the winds cease, the toiling is over, the heart is cheered, and doubts and fears give away ; Jesus comes into the poor shattered vessel, and *all is well*.

JUNE 24.—*Hear my prayer, O Lord ! give ear to my supplications.*—PSALM cxliii. 1, and following verses.

Read the whole of this sweet Psalm, my soul ; meditate on each verse, and observe if there be not something in each portion to suit thy experience. What can be said upon it ? Let the heart respond—let the soul enter into judgment with itself. And, O blessed spirit, do thou assist the meditation, and help my soul to plead with fervency, in the words of the Psalmist, "Hear my prayer—in thy faithfulness answer me !" Do I not see the exercises of the Christian ? And, oh, how blessed is it to have such fervency of supplication even, when the soul is overwhelmed with trials—the enemy persecuting, smiting down to the ground, causing the soul to dwell in darkness, the spirit overwhelmed, the heart desolate, remembering past days ! bent to stretch forth the hands—the soul to thirst after God ! This is the exercise of faith ; and then the pleadings—"Hear me speedily ; my spirit faileth ; hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit." Doth my soul know anything of *this holy pleading*—this soul-anxiety—this

confidence in the midst of darkness?—"Cause me hear thy lovingkindness. In thee do I trust, to keep the way wherein I should walk; I lift up my unto thee." Then is the cry for deliverance from enemies; and, oh, blessed effort given!—"I unto thee to hide me;" and then the desire of soul, "Teach me to do thy will, for thou art God:" "Quicken me into renewed life, for name's sake—for *thy* righteousness' sake, bring soul out of trouble—of thy mercy cut off enemies, and destroy all that afflict my soul."

not the soul's fervent desire to have all the law the flesh subdued, all the enemies cut off, hinder sweet communion with the God of holiness. When darkness is upon the soul, it pines and longs after the sweet manifestations of a Saviour's loving presence; and well is it if the soul be not at ease, if the spirit of prayer and supplication be vouchsafed, if holy wrestling be given, if Jesus be longed for and sought after. O Lord, leave me not to a careless spirit! give, oh, give me the pleadings of David; give me faith to trust when I cannot see—to follow thee, and not run *from* thee—to thirst after thee, and not run *from* thee—to thirst after thee when dry and barren: and not hide *from* thee in thee, thou precious, precious Lord Jesus!

JUNE 25.—*And it shall come to pass, in the day when the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow and fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve.*—ISAIAH xiv. 3.

We may surely apply literal Scripture to spiritual experience, for the soul's profit; and therefore the soul is led to look at self, and the work of grace is seen in these words. And canst thou not realize "th

in which the Lord has given thee rest from thy sorrow (of heart), thy fear (of conscience), and from the hard bondage (the slavery of the world) in which thou wast made to serve? "Yes, yes! in his day of manifestive grace; sin revealed—justice condemned—sorrow and fear prevailed, until the still small voice of pardon through Jesus was whispered to the bleeding heart—then was a rest indeed: and still there is a rest in the all-sufficient sacrifice for sin—Jesus ever liveth to plead for sinners, who are justified through him only—his blood speaketh peace—he giveth rest from *all* trouble, and sorrow, and fear, when faith is hanging upon him, and resting in the arms of everlasting love; and then it can sweetly look beyond this fleeting world, to that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

To rest from our sorrow and fear,
To rest in the love of the Lord,
To rest e'en when darkness appear,
Is to trust in *his faith* and *his word*.

Then help me, blessed Spirit, to trust
In Jesus, and Jesus alone!
To look on this world with disgust,
And sigh for my heavenly home.

JUNE 26.—*And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him: we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.*—Is. xxv. 9.

Yes, my soul this is the gospel day. Lo, our God has tabernacled in flesh—the faithful waited for him; and one said, "Now let me depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." God veiled the Godhead in flesh, and Jesus came to save. *This is the Lord Jesus—the Messiah waited*

for—expected. Then began the gospel day, which will end when Jesus comes again, to begin the reign of glory, which will never end. And many wait for him now; the sin-sick soul waits for him—they that hunger and thirst after righteousness wait for him—the renewed soul sitting in darkness waits for him; and doth not my soul wait and long for him daily, to apply pardon and peace—to renew the blessed assurance of eternal life treasured up in the God-Man, Christ Jesus our Lord—our Saviour, for whose re-appearing we are now waiting, and shall we not “be glad, and rejoice in his salvation?” and

“When we see him as he is,
We’ll praise him as we ought.”

JUNE 27.—*And in that day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth.*—ISAIAH xxii. 12, and two following verses.

This state of the rebellious Israelites is a representation of every unrenewed soul who has heard the gospel sound. Does not the gospel proclaim “repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?” Does it not call the sinner “to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth?” Look at the world of national Christianity, “And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine. Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.” Yea, my soul, this is the state of professing Christendom; and may not every renewed soul say, “And it was revealed in my ears by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die,

saith the Lord God of Hosts?" Oh, ye who have heard the gospel sound, and remain dead in sin, shall your iniquity be purged away in the grave? Ah, no! If ye die an unrepenting, unrenewed, unjustified sinner, such ye must rise in the resurrection. The work of the Spirit is to convince of sin; and when convinced, there will be sorrow and anguish of heart; and being made alive *to Christ*, ye become dead to sin, dead to the world, dead *in Christ Jesus*; and when the grave receives thy mortal part, thy released spirit shall be with Christ, to await the re-union to the body in a joyful resurrection.

My soul, to what do these contemplations lead thy thoughts? The brevity of life, the certainty of death, the duration of eternity, the expectation of a judgment, the hope of resurrection. And has not a sense of sin, by the Spirit of holiness, brought *thee* to weeping and mourning, to baldness and girding with sackcloth? And has not a sense of pardon brought thee to joy and gladness, eating the flesh of the Son of God, and drinking the new wine of his kingdom of grace; and truly we may say, let us eat and drink—eat, abundantly—for to-morrow we may die; nay, this very day we may sink into the arms of death. What, then, can insure an entrance into the kingdom of glory but being found in Christ, feeding on his flesh by faith; and, washed in his sin-atoning blood, we are made meet for the Master's use, by whose death we are purged from iniquity—in whom we are justified, accepted, and complete—in whose likeness we shall awake, after the sleep of death—with whom we shall reign, as kings and priests unto God. This honour have all his saints.

Holy Spirit, let not these words be as "water spilt

on the ground!" Apply unto my soul the blessed realization, that, with the lamp burning with holy oil, I may, at a moment's warning—nay, every moment, be ready to depart and be with Christ Jesus my Lord.

Thou weeping, mourning, naked soul,
Go, cast thy sackcloth off;
HE speaks the word, and makes thee whole,
Let sinners rail and scoff.

"Come, eat and drink abundantly,
My friends, beloved all;
The time is short, ye soon must die—
My sheep by name I call.

"A place I have prepared above
For all by me made free,
Secured by everlasting love—
Where I am they shall be.

"Do tribulations cast thee down?
Thy troubles soon shall cease;
Behold at last the glorious crown,
And now, in me, ye've peace."

Jesus, our Lord, will keep us up;
His love can never end;
He'll gird himself, and with us sup—
Our dear, unchanging Friend.

Jesus, our eyes are up to thee,
Thy Godhead we adore,
And praise thee through eternity,
When time shall be no more.

JUNE 28.—*And ye shall be hated of all men, for my name's sake; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*—MARK xiii. 13.

Our Lord said, at another time, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you!" and this is not the portion of those "who will live godly in Christ Jesus." No, no! be truly faithful to Jesus, "And ye shall be

sted of all for his name's sake." The apostles went forth bearing the cross in the power of the Holy host, not fearing man, and were persecuted unto death; but when persecutions cease the Church is in a low state—profession rears its head, and is well pleased with the outworks—the spiritual Israel hide themselves, and, blessed for them, they are hid in Christ, and still may we say, "But he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved." The Lord be praised, he hath said, "His sheep shall never perish!" so that he will surely cause all his own to endure unto the end; and this is the testimony of the true seed. Many fall away from the faith, and are not renewed unto repentance. they were never in the covenant of grace, for the promise is sure to all the seed; salvation is treasured up in Christ—not in the creature, nor anything he can perform. The predestinated are called—the called are justified—the justified are glorified; and who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect—not any of the powers of darkness, for it is God that justifieth, and whom he hath justified all endure unto the end. My soul, wilt thou not endure the cross? canst thou not bear to be hated by the world, so that thou endurest unto the end, and be saved with an everlasting salvation?

Lord, send thy Spirit upon thy Israel, that they may glory in the cross—look unto *thee* only—be crucified unto the world, and be bold on thy side, despising all shame from the world, for thy name's sake!

JUNE 29.—*And he cometh and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour?—MARK xiv. 37.*

The parts of Scripture which relate the actions of our Lord, bring us, as it were, into his actual presence—we see, we hear him; and this text brings a multitude of thoughts into the mind, which, indeed, can only be meditated upon—but the half cannot be expressed: we see a chain of the most important events that ever transpired upon this earth—we see the weakness of humanity and the forbearance of Divinity, with the work of his hands. The admonitions of Jesus to his disciples were fruitless—"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation;" yet they slept at such an hour! "And he cometh the third time, and saith, Sleep on now, and take your rest—it is enough—the hour is come; behold the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." Yes, ye sleeping disciples, the time for watching has been spent in slumbering; and now Satan has the advantage; and, in this hour of darkness they all forsook their Lord and fled. One follows him afar off, and then denies, with an oath, any knowledge of him who was about to offer up his life, that erring Peter might be saved from eternal death. Yes, Jesus is betrayed into the hands of sinners, to save sinners from the vengeance due to the most aggravated guilt, from a just and holy God; but who, among the sons of Adam, will come to Jesus to be saved? Why, all whom the Father draweth will come—all whom the Spirit quickeneth are made willing in the day of his power; and all who so come Jesus will in no wise cast out.

My soul, behold thy Lord—thy crucified Lord.

Thou mayest sleep on now, and take thy rest *in him*, as to thy eternal salvation ; but beware of slumbering, lest the adversary gain the advantage, at a time when thou art more especially called to watch and pray. " O Lord, hold thou me up ! " must be the constant prayer.

JUNE 30.—*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked : who can know it ?*—JER. xvii. 9.

The heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ? Who will allow the truth of these words ? are there not multitudes of the sons of Adam who deny it ? And yet, thus saith the Lord—thus is it recorded in his word ; and can there be a greater proof of the deceitfulness of the heart than the denial of it ? or of its desperate wickedness than opposing the words of the Lord ? Alas, " who can know it ? " Who knoweth what is in his own heart ? Not one can tell what is in the heart of his fellow-man. It is the Lord alone that knoweth the heart and reins ; and he only can give the final judgment. Most blessed is it, my soul, to be fully persuaded of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of thy heart ; to be conscious that thou dost not know half that lieth within, neither of its deception nor iniquity ; but, oh, thrice blessed to know that thy sin is forgiven, thine iniquity purged away ! Lord, it is not in man to direct his steps ; his ways must be ordered by thyself, and " from *thee* is his fruit found." Thou wilt give to every man his reward, in perfect justice and equity, according to thine own infinite mind and wisdom, for thou judgest by *that* which thou alone canst see ; thou seest the heart, the *deceitful, wicked heart*, and thou alone canst tell

whether it be a broken and contrite heart; broken under a sense of its depravity by the convincing power of thine own Spirit, and brought to the blood of sprinkling, which alone can cleanse from all iniquity, and, through Jesus, receive the precious gift of eternal life, given by Jesus (John x. 28; and vi. 37) to all whom the Father gave to him. O Lord, it is the heart which *thou* lookest at! and if that be right with *thee*, the inheritance is certain.

JULY.

JULY 1.—*And the work of righteousness shall be peace: and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.*—ISAIAH xxxii. 17.

It is most blessed to come from the sight of sinful self—the deceitful and wicked heart of our corrupt nature—to the contemplation of the glorious work of salvation! and this work is so blessedly set forth in the words upon which we are brought to meditate, that my soul doth rest upon them with “great delight;” and, under the Spirit’s guidance, I desire to be led, while contemplating in those few words the *whole* work of the redemption of the Church. There is but *One* that ever wrought a work of righteousness upon earth! and that work was, in truth, “peace on earth—good will towards man.” Yes, my soul, God reconciled to his rebel children—his elect seed—by the righteous work of him who was appointed from all eternity to bear the guilt of his fallen race—to atone for them with his precious blood, and bring those nigh to God, who, by wicked works, were afar off. “The work of righteousness shall be peace with the

Lord, and the *effect* quietness and assurance for ever." What! shall every soul which is brought into the kingdom of grace have quietness and assurance? Ah, no! this is not the lot of our time-state; but it is the lot of eternity to every redeemed soul. The work of Jesus in *peace*—the effect, *rest for ever in him*. The work has subdued and put to silence all the enemies of the Lord, as to final triumph over his redeemed; and as surely as Jesus died and rose from the dead, so certainly shall he bring many sons to glory, to be *for ever* with him who purchased them with his blood. Blessed Jesus, thy finished work is as complete as infinite love could make it, and as unchangeable as the *will* of Jehovah! Praise to thee, O Jesus, Lord! the only righteous One—the only One in whom a sinner can have perfect peace, with "quietness and assurance for ever."

JULY 2.—*And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up, wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?*—JOSHUA vii. 10.

What is the admonition my soul would take from these words? To come before the Lord in deep humility of soul is a high privilege for the believer at all times; but when the enemies have prevailed and overcome, truly it is then we shall, Joshua-like, lie upon our face, and not rise until the Lord command; the soul, abashed, seeks the renewings of the presence of the Lord, and dares not move or act but as his presence goes with the discomfited Israelite, who waits, and asks, and lies still until the command comes forth; and when the Lord speaks, then the soul is lifted up, rises from the dust to face the foes in the strength of the Lord of battles—the accursed

thing is sought for—the battle is renewed in the name of the Lord; and victory is certain when he is on our side; and all the praise and glory shall be given to the Lord of Hosts.

JULY 3.—*And the Lord said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand.*—JOSHUA viii. 18.

We are brought again to contemplate Joshua, and my soul again views him acting by the command of the Lord God, under whose direction he led the armies of Israel, and overcame. "Stretch out the spear," and Joshua did so. The Lord commands—his command is his *will*—and then he gives power to effect, and a will to obey. "And Joshua drew not his hand back until he had destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai." When the Lord worketh, all the enemies are brought to subjection—his strength does wonders; but the weakness of the creature is sure to fail. But my soul seeth a greater than Joshua. May we not look at the Captain of our salvation here? Oh, yes! my soul would contemplate Jesus accomplishing the commands of his Father—doing his will—fighting the battles for his spiritual Israel—stretching out his hand where-with he held the destroying spear, until the enemies of his redeemed Church were vanquished—the law fulfilled in every jot—atonement made for the remission of sins, by his precious blood-shedding on the cross—Satan foiled at every point—death overcome in his own body—and all finished and complete, to present an undefiled spouse to himself. Jesus hath accomplished all things for the eternal salvation of his affianced bride, who, though still subject, in her mortal body, to sin, temptation, and death—yet, is she free from taint—spotless and pure—hid in the bosom of

her Lord, and freely justified from all things, in the sight of the Father, by the complete work of his beloved Son, by whom only are sinners reconciled to God ; and in him, and by him, she shall be raised a glorious body, and be for ever with her Lord, who has given himself for her. Amen. Alleluia!

JULY 4.—*O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*—JEREMIAH X. 23.

How forcibly do the Scriptures confirm the soul's conviction, that the creature can do nothing, but as directed and willed by the Lord. Look at these sweet words of the mourning prophet, and say, my soul, dost thou not feel them to be words of truth. It is a sweet state, to be truly brought to a *knowledge*, and to the *acknowledgment* of it ; and then the prophet cries out, " O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing." Here is the soul under a consciousness of the need of correction, yet suing the Lord for mercy. Oh, not in anger, Lord, for then I must come to nothing! My sins are great, the convinced soul exclaims ; correct me not in proportion to my deservings, for then I am eternally lost ; correct me in pity to my helpless nature ; correct me, and bring me to thyself. I cannot direct my own steps, Lord, *thou* knowest ; correct me in love, in faithfulness, for I am ever needing thy chastisement—not in anger, that would annihilate me—not in wrath ; " if that be kindled, yea, but a little," shall be consumed. Oh, gracious and merciful God, thy wrath has been appeased in the person of my all-sufficient Redeemer ; and all thy corrections are in love, to *subdue within me that which is opposed to*

thy ways. Thou, O Lord, directest all, appointest all, and wilt accomplish all—then, assuredly, all shall be well. How merciful, how blessed, that man cannot direct his steps contrary to thy purposes! All things ordered by thee, O Lord, must be ordered well, and shall end for thy glory, and thy children's good; they know not what is for their profit, but fain would have the pleasure of their own perverse ways; but "God, who is rich in mercy," whose wisdom is infinite, directs their steps into the right path; and when their eyes are opened to see a Father's loving hand, they bless him for correction, and praise the God of love in the face of his dear Son, through whom and in whom we possess all the treasures of eternity, to whom be all the glory.

JULY 5.—*The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.*—PROV. xvi. 1.

It is very blessed when we are truly brought to see the Lord's hand in all our ways—to trace him in the minutest incident that may occur—to see him in every path, and to acknowledge him as the bestower of every good and perfect gift. How truly is the sovereignty of God set forth in the words of the preacher! and confirming our last meditation. Oh, my soul, that thou couldst, at all times, so give thyself up into the hands of thy Lord, as to leave thyself exclusively with him! Then the evil heart would not so wander, thy tongue utter perverseness, and flesh so often prevail; but here is the whole matter, flesh is under its old master, but all spiritual things come from the "Father of Light."

In conversion, how fully have I proved that "the

preparation of the heart was from the Lord!" and the answer of the tongue, "Lord, I believe!" was by his own power. And, O my soul, look at thy self-righteousness, in the next verse—see what thou wert by nature—"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes." See what cleaveth to thee still, even under grace. "But the Lord weigheth the spirits." Bear this in thy mind, whatever thy ways may be—however right or pure the motive, or disinterested the act in thine own eyes; the Lord alone can truly judge and justly weigh the spirits—the secret spring which moveth thee is scarcely known, and often not acknowledged to thyself; but the renewed soul is continually brought to the bar of self-condemnation, and, sinking into the dust, is brought to see Jesus, as the only Surety, to be put into the balance, to outweigh all the ways of 'sinful self,' and "righteous self;" and thus only can the Lord weigh the spirits and free the soul, which can then sing, in looking unto Jesus, with holy triumph, Glory, glory to the Lamb!

JULY 6.—*Thou holdest mine eyes waking. I am so troubled that I cannot speak.*—PSALM lxxvii. 4.

The experience of the saints, in all ages, is the same—the same God to look unto—the same flesh to contend with; and, though varying in feature, and differing in degree, still it is a warfare between flesh and spirit, with the variations of faith and unbelief—light and darkness—joy and sorrow—hope and fear—in the mountain, in the valley—sitting at ease and contending manfully—looking at self and looking unto Jesus.

The Psalmist, it appears, was in darkness, and was looking back to time past, calling to remembrance his

songs in the night, and, blessed position—he “communed with his own heart, and his spirit made diligent search.” And is not this the Christian’s experience, when darkness comes upon us? While we are in smooth paths, full of joy and peace, we do not search and look into self so much; but darkness comes, barrenness and coldness, indifference to the word, and a *feeling* of less love to Jesus—then we commune with our heart, and the spirit makes diligent search—then we begin to question the work of grace, and doubt if really we have tasted that the Lord is gracious. And what do these searchings produce in the child of God? Confirmation in the faith—getting out of self, and looking more to the Saviour of sinners—a remembrance of the Most High—a deeper sense of sin—a clearer sight of self—a firmer trust in Christ—less dependence on feelings, and more a life of faith. These are some of the ways of the travellers to Zion taught by the Holy Spirit, and known only to themselves. The wilderness path is trodden alone by Israel, and the windings thereof are a “secret” to the stranger; but, blessed be our God, there is a terminating time, an end of the journey, a passing over Jordan, and an entrance, yea, an abundant entrance, into the heavenly Canaan, through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and man. “Thy way, O Lord, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a god as our God?”

JULY 7.—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*—JOHN xii. 24.

What a beautiful illustration does our Lord give,

by a natural figure, of the necessity and efficacy of his death! "Verily, verily—except a corn of wheat die, it abideth alone." Had not Christ died he could not have brought many sons to glory—had he not stoned for sin, not one of Adam's race had been saved from the curse of sin—had he not paid the penalty due to God for the breaking his commands, all must have perished everlastingly—"But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Oh, blessed assurance! Who can number the grains of corn, which, through successive years, will be produced from a single grain sown in the earth? Who can number the multitude that will stand on the right hand, at the last day, washed in the blood of Jesus—saved by his death? 'No man!' Oh, my soul, rejoice, if thou hast a good hope of forming one of the number for whom Jesus died; and see eternal life is the fruit of *his* death—not the fruit of *thy* doings. Jesus died to bring forth much fruit, and he will "come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

ULY 8.—*Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?*—2 CHRON. xix. 2.

Here is a reproof, from a prophet of the Lord to the king of Judah, who professed to acknowledge the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as his God. He was reproofed for forming a coalition with the wicked king of Assyria, who had forsaken the God of his fathers, and did evil in the sight of the Lord. It appeared an evil thing, in those days, for the people of God, the literal Israel, to join hand in hand with those who served not Israel's God. Israel had divided, and the revolting tribes were worse than the heathen nations, in that they forsook the living God, and committed greater

abominations than those; and the king of Judah helped him who hated the Lord of Hosts. What evils we continually see arising from the union of the people of God with the heathen, recorded in the word; and although the Christian dispensation forms a different character from the Jewish, though embodied in it, and associated with it—yet well would it be if the followers of Jesus were a more separated and peculiar people; and did they really live godly in Christ Jesus, the world of ungodly and the world of professors would soon withdraw from them. But, Lord, all things shall be accomplished in thine own time; and when persecutions arise, thy sheep will draw closer together, and manifest themselves more, “whose they are, and whom they serve;” and when there is an open declaration of hatred to the truth as it is in Jesus, under the appalling cloak of pretended Christianity, the “defenders of the faith” will not require a prophet’s reproof—“Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?” God forbid! Lord, help thine own sheep, thy tribe of Judah, to be faithful unto death to thee.

JULY 9.—*Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?*—PROV. XX. 9.

Not one, who has felt the plague of his heart and the sinfulness of sin; but, oh, amazing mystery, there are who can say, My heart is clean, and I am pure from my sin, in the sight of a heart-searching God. But I have not made myself so. Oh, no! it is only by the power of the Spirit that Jesus can be revealed, as the cleanser of all sin, by his precious blood; and only through him that the soul, the guilty soul, can be accounted pure, without spot before God; and by

With this blessedness is made known to the sin-stricken soul. Sin revealed by the Spirit, condemnation under the law, or without law—all, so led, become guilty before God in their own eyes, and no peace for that soul until pardon is sealed upon the conscience by the Spirit, through the peace-speaking blood of the Lamb; then can the released soul sing, "Glory to the Lamb!" and say, "My heart is clean, I am pure from my sin;" and this alone can reconcile the sinner to God—nothing but the blood of Jesus—nothing but the merits of Jesus—nothing but being in Jesus—can pardon, justify, and secure for eternity the chosen seed, "Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God"—ordained to eternal life from the foundation of the world, by eternal covenant union, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

JULY 10.—*Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.*—ISAIAH li. 6.

It is a high privilege for the believer to be led to trace the immutability of Jehovah's word. Yes, heaven and earth may pass away—and man shall die, and return to the dust from whence he came—all created things shall perish, but the "salvation of the Lord shall be for ever, and his righteousness shall not be abolished." The salvation of the soul is for ever, and the righteousness of the redeemed is secured, for God was in Christ reconciling man unto himself; and Jesus is the all-in-all to his people, whose "life is hid with him in God." The heavens

and the earth shall depart, but salvation is sure; all flesh shall see corruption, but the Spirit remaineth for ever—the soul can never die; and, praised be the God of grace, he hath in himself given salvation and righteousness for eternity, secured in, and by, Christ, for all his seed! and these, through faith, believe in the Son, whom the Father hath sent. Yes, lift up thine eyes to the heavens, look upon the earth beneath; and though but a speck that thou canst behold, yet are they wondrous works of thy Creator's power. But these shall vanish away, even these almighty works; but his salvation is eternal, his word abideth for ever. Oh, my soul, rejoice in the Lord! praise him, praise him, for his mercy endureth for ever!

JULY 11.—*Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.*—PSALM lxxxiv. 9.

What a precious portion is this unto my soul! Daily have I need to cry, with the whole Church of Christ, "Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed." Precious, precious words! when applied with power to the heart, by the Holy Spirit. Oh, my soul, how blessed to thee is every renewed application of the pardoning blood of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world! every fresh view of him, as Mediator between God and my guilty soul—every manifestation of love to that life, which is hid with him in God, and must live for ever. Yes, it is most blessed to come before the "High and Holy One," and cry, "Behold my shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed." Oh, my shield! Is Jesus indeed my shield? Then is not eternal safety thine as one of his redeemed—one

of his body, the Church—*our* shield, to hide from the just wrath of God—the condemnation of the law, or the judgment without law—the penalty due to sin—the final triumph of the devil—the dominion of the flesh—the stratagems of the world—the sting of death—and most securely from every device of every enemy to keep the soul which has been purchased by Jesus out of its everlasting inheritance? Then, O God, look upon the face of thine anointed, and there thou beholdest everything perfected according to thine own appointment; thou seest thy Church, thy guilty Church, justified in him, cleansed from all her filthiness—pure and undefiled. The holiness of God cannot be reconciled to an unholy thing, cannot accept the person wherein there is one blemish—then where can such an unholy, “earthen vessel” as man hope for shelter from the pure eyes of Jehovah? “Behold, O God, our shield” in thy dear Son! Thou dost look upon the face of Jesus, thine anointed, and accepteth us in the Beloved, with whom thou art well pleased; and to him be all the glory! to him shall be eternal praise from all his ransomed Church!

JULY 12.—*Truly my soul waiteth upon God—from him cometh my salvation: he only is my rock, he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.*—PSALM lxii. 1, 2.

To one who has stumbled at this stumbling-stone, this glorious mystery, it is a great mercy to be continually led to see the oneness between the Father and the Son, that as Jehovah is God, so the anointed is God; and my soul, I trust in humble prostration, is led to see the *One* God and two persons.

The former meditation brought me sweetly to view the Lord's anointed, the Man Christ Jesus, as a shield; and he is the everlasting Rock, upon which the salvation of sinners is founded—here, this day, am I brought to see the God of David, the Lord of Hosts, addressed as him from whom salvation cometh as a rock—as a defence. Oh, my soul, it is *One* God—God manifest in the flesh—to whom salvation belongeth. In the third and fourth verses I see Jesus the Son of Man, in his humiliation, in his suffering upon earth, when he became obedient unto death, when he reviled not his revilers; and how prophetic! “Ye shall be slain, all of ye; as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.” They consult to cast him down from his excellency—delight in liableness with their mouth, but curse inwardly. Oh, my soul, look at the scene, from the garden of Gethsemane to Mount Calvary! look at the *apostle* Judas, the betrayer of Jesus—see the mockers, revilers, spitters, mock-worshippers, and murderous crucifiers—all, all shall be cast down from *their* excellency—all whose hearts are not brought to worship Jesus (and God in him, and through him) in spirit and in truth, shall be as “a bowing wall and tottering fence.” My soul, do thou, in humble adoration, bow thyself before thy Lord, and praise his mercy and his grace, by which he has plucked thee as a brand from the burning!

JULY 13.—*Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*—HABAK. iii. 18.

It is a highly privileged experience, when the believer can, under soul-destitution, still behold Jesus, the unchangeable fountain of “life and light.” These words, my soul, were applied spiritually to thee, when

young in grace, weak in experience, and very ignorant in head-knowledge; but a trying situation brought them with power to thy heart—surrounded with barrenness, outwardly, and a fancied cessation of thine own works—yet thou didst feel joy in thy Lord. But time has taught thee something more; the heart is become cold, and works of labour are counted nothing worth—spiritual destitution is felt—there appeareth neither blossom nor fruit—no apparent oil—the fields bare—creatures cut off—no store in the stalls—“Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation,” is still—the Lord be praised—all I have to trust in, all I have to rest on; and in this I will rejoice, so long as the Lord giveth me power. There are times, also, of outward destitution—no apparent blossoms nor fruit; the oil of the Spirit seems stayed—the labourers see no vital effects—the flocks are few, and the herds scattered; but, blessed be the God of our salvation, his work, “his strange work,” is going on—the Spirit’s operations, in bringing in the elect, cannot be quenched: man’s efforts may fail, but God’s purposes never can—Christ’s flock shall—*must* all be brought into the fold, and the scattered herds led to their stalls in due time.

Oh, my soul, “rejoice, and again I say, rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of thy salvation!” for Jesus alone is worthy—in him alone can we rejoice; and to him be our eternal hallelujahs!

JULY 14.—*Thou tellest my wanderings.*—Ps. lvi. 8.

What can our fellow-mortal do in times of soul-trial? How very blessed it is to come before the Lord with a holy boldness, and cry, “Thou tellest my wanderings,” *can alone be understood by those who*

have experienced the blessedness of it. Oh, my soul! to have a compassionate High Priest, who knoweth thy infirmities, before whom thou canst come and cast thy burden, when thy fellow-sinner would hear but to condemn—listen, perhaps, but to betray, and could give thee no real help. Lord, thou knowest *all* my wanderings—to *thee* are open all the secrets of the heart; thou lookest not at the outward man, but searchest the reins. Lord, remember my tears, and in the book of thy remembrance, let my sorrow, for numberless transgressions, and my desires after thee be noted as a sinner pardoned by thy precious blood, and clothed anew in thy glorious righteousness—then, oh, then for faith, that, with the Psalmist, I may fully rest in thy strength, my Lord and my God!—"When I cry, then shall my enemies turn back; this I know, for God is for me." Blessed exercise of faith! Oh, for the rich application to my soul, to realize the *certainty*, through faith, that it *shall* be done! to *believe*, as God is for me, so shall the enemies of my soul turn back, according to *thy* power and *thy* will. Jesus, in thy strength, with thy help, I can do all things—without thee, nothing. Help me to cry unto thee, that the enemies may not have dominion! Assist, by thy blessed Spirit, and give that fulness of faith, to say, "This I *know*, for God is for me." Who then shall be against me? If Christ be for me, the powers of darkness shall not prevail. Amen, Amen.

JULY 15.—*Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and troubled about many things.*—LUKE x. 41.

How sweet it must have been to hear the Saviour's voice! — Blessed, most blessed, to hear his approving accents! and humbling, to have his merciful reproof

—*merciful*, because it did not come with the fiery wrath of the law, but with the reproof love of a compassionate Saviour. Martha, Martha was troubled about serving her Lord—Mary desirous to hear the wisdom which flowed from his lips; Martha was cumbered about admistering to the body—Mary wished to have her soul fed, at the feet of her dear Lord; Martha, in her care for temporal necessities, was troubled about many things. “But one thing is needful” (Jesus said), “and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken from her.” What a precious assurance! what a blessing to realize! what a privilege to enjoy! what a word to hear! what a Saviour to trust in!

My soul, are the blessings of Mary thine? dost thou see the one thing needful? hast thou chosen the better part? Oh, if Jesus hath chosen thee, then thou art his, and he is thine, and the part thou hast in him shall not be taken from thee.

Blessed Lord, salvation is all from thee—in thee—all by grace; and to be kept humble and teachable at thy feet, the sweetest position we can occupy, until taken to thy bosom, in everlasting glory!

JULY 16.—*Did ever people hear the voice of God, speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?*—DEUT. iv. 33, 34.

There is not a more striking analogy to the life of the Christian than the deliverances of ancient Israel from Egypt, and their subsequent wanderings through the wilderness. In the contemplation of these words of the Holy one of Israel, by the mouth of his servant Moses, my soul, thou canst not but behold the wonders of electing love. Why was this people selected above all others? Why were other nations

passed by, while the powerful hand of the Almighty was stretched out to save those who rebelled against him, and continually provoked him to anger? Why did he deliver them from their hard bondage, and bring them to the promised land, after forty years' trial and travel through a dreary wilderness? The questions can only be solved in the view of God's eternal purposes, his electing love, and his good pleasure in doing whatsoever he willed, without giving account of his ways to his creatures—the clay he hath fashioned. May we not say, under the New Testament dispensation, did any but the elect vessels of mercy ever hear the voice of God in the fiery law, the cry for vengeance of God's justice, and live? As guilt is stamped upon all men, will there not be the double death, unless the voice of mercy, by a crucified Redeemer, be revealed to the soul? and this can only reach the ear of those who are ordained to eternal life. Oh, my soul, contemplate, meditate upon the wonders of redeeming love! see, see the many that have been passed by, whilst thou, *thou* hast been brought out of Egyptian darkness, with mighty signs and wonders, by a stretched-out arm and great terrors! and, oh, canst thou not say, "Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him?" Lord Jesus—Saviour—unto thee must the guilty look, that peace may be obtained—to eternal love—electing grace—that thou, my soul, wert called, and others left! Thee would I adore—Israel's Jehovah—God in Christ!

JULY 17.—*The Lord also will be a refuge to the oppressed; a refuge in times of trouble.*—PSALM ix. 9.
The promises of Scripture are most blessed, when

applied unto the soul, and when they especially come in time of need. How sweetly does this text flow into my heart! how sweetly follow in the train of the last meditation! The soul brought out of nature's darkness—*knowing* the Lord to be God, can alone truly value the precious soul-comforting words of the precious Bible when spiritually applied. Oh, my soul, when *specially* applied, precious indeed! The Lord has not only brought his chosen out of bondage, but he will be their refuge when oppressed—a refuge in times of trouble. Can my soul enter into this experience? Oh, hast thou not found the Lord a blessed refuge, when oppressed by thy fellow-sinner, or by the sin that dwelleth within thee, or when trouble has come upon thee? Yes, Lord, thou hast been so truly; and it is only in trying times that the soul can appreciate thy great faithfulness, power, and love. And rest thy thoughts, my soul, on the next portion, "And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee, for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." Precious promise! Oh, for faith to exercise its truth—for the Spirit's application, to realize its preciousness! To *know* the Lord is the greatest privilege upon earth; to *trust* thee the high privilege of those who know thee; and a sweet exercise of the soul to cry, "For thou hast not forsaken, when I sought thee." Lord Jesus! thou blessed procurer of all the blessings of thy Church—to thee would I daily come, for faith to see thee in all—trust thee for all—seek thee at all times—rest upon thee where no arm of flesh can help—look unto thee and see no creature, but in thee! Dearest Lord, help mine unbelief—
increase my faith!

JULY 18.—*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*—ROMANS VI. 11.

The imputation to the Church of all the acts of the glorious head of the Church is a glorious truth denied by some, and wretchedly perverted by others. What saith the apostle Paul in this chapter? and what saith my soul in reflecting upon this verse? Holy Spirit, guide me, and grant that what the pen may trace thou mayest approve and own, and thy word confirm!

The great apostle fully set forth the death of believers in the death of Christ—"Buried with him in his overwhelming death"—"Planted with him in the likeness of his death"—"The old man crucified with him." This can only be by imputation, and thus, every act performed by the head is imputed to the members; and as they died unto sin in Jesus, so shall they reign with him in glory, partaking also of his resurrection.

This is the blessed privilege of every renewed soul—"Dead indeed unto sin," by the death of Jesus—no condemnation for those who are in him. Shall we then continue in sin, that grace may abound? We echo the beloved apostle's words, most fervently, "God forbid!" and refer to his admonition, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Sin is still in the mortal body, we know, but it does not reign in it—has not dominion over the new-born soul—the old man is crucified, in the sight of God, with Jesus, and the body of sin is under daily crucifixion in those whom the love of Jesus constrains; the struggle, the war, the resistance against sin is daily—nay, hourly going on; the grief, the sorrow, for inbred sin; the

joy, the peace, for justification before God, and the imputation of all the blessings procured by Jesus, can only be understood by those who feel the one and believe the other. Yes, blessed Jesus, all is complete in thee! Oh, to view thee thus—feel this blessed union to thee—and to believe, through precious faith, that thou art all and everything to thy Church—thy people separately! and, O my soul, to realize personality—is not this bliss below? does not this excite a loathing of sin, that made thee suffer—a love of holiness, which thou dost love—a desire for the mortification of the deeds of the mortal body, and a longing to be where thou art? for there sin cannot enter—nothing unholy can come where thou art—the new-born soul shall leave the mortal body to rot in the grave, and come before thee pure in thy purity, spotless from thy perfect work; and when thou hast raised the corruptible bodies, incorruptible and glorious bodies, they shall be drawn to thyself, to reign with thee for ever.

JULY 19.—*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*—ROMANS xii. 21.

Once more am led to observe the unpremeditated links in the portions for the last few days. From seeing the electing love and almighty power of Jehovah, in bringing the soul from darkness to light, we saw the blessed promise of help from that mighty arm, and then were sweetly led into the fulness of Jesus, as the complete sin-bearer of his people—but not the sin-encourager; and now, my soul, thou hast one of the sweetest gospel admonitions that can follow the previously blessed truths for thy meditation. *The sweet spirit of the gospel of Jesus—meek,*

patient, forbearing—is surely set forth in this admonition, indited by the Holy Spirit of love and peace. Mark it well, my soul ! meditate on it again and again—"Be not overcome of evil"—let not sin have dominion. Here is the struggle, lest we should be overcome ; and often does the spirit of flesh arise, and revengeful feelings strive for mastery ; the pride of the heart has been put to the test—some one has trampled upon thine honour—has spoken evil, *falsely* (how thankful, *if falsely*, shouldst thou be). Hush—be still—"Be not overcome of evil—let it not *rest* in thy *heart*—leave it with thy Lord—supplicate *him*—pray him to help, that thou mayest be enabled to overcome evil with good. In so doing thou shalt, as the apostle says, melt thine enemy into kindness ; and if thine enemy be too hardened to be thus wrought upon, here will be further exercise for thy forbearance. Leave it with thy Lord for him to work ; and do thou strive against flesh—knowing thy old man is crucified with Jesus, let the new man sue for victory through our precious Lord.

JULY 20.—*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice ; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.*—EPH. iv. 31, 32.

Have we not "precept upon precept, line upon line" ? and, as if one admonition were not sufficient, here is another day's meditation for thee on Christian conduct ; and well would it be for the Church of Christ if the ear were more open to the peace-speaking sound of Christian harmony and love. And do God's own people, who have been led into the wilderness,

indulge in bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil-speaking, malice? Oh, my soul—my brethren—take heed to your spirit, and pray consider, with attention, the next verse; put away all these, “And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake (not, *will forgive*—Oh, do note this in the memory’s storehouse!) *hath forgiven you.*” This is the talisman for brotherly love, for Christian conduct—the law of love for what *hath* been done for thy sinful soul; for in proportion as thou lovest thy Lord for what he hath done, and dost appreciate and apprehend his work and labour of love, so wilt thou love the brethren in Jesus, when thou canst recognize the impress of the love-seal. My soul, bear in mind this tender admonition, and may the Lord the Spirit seal it upon the heart continually: “Forgiving one another, even as God, for *Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you.*”

JULY 21.—*And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.*—DEUT. viii. 2, 5, 16.

Ponder, my soul, over these words, which appear to have been separated from the chapter as peculiarly striking to thy apprehension; and do they not unfold much of the great mysteries in the gracious leadings of thy God with his spiritual Israel? “Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord led thee in the wilderness;” and dost thou not remember all his dealings hitherto, that thou hast been humbled, and proved, and shown what was in thine heart—how totally incapable of keeping the holy commandments? “Thou

shalt also consider in thine heart, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee."

O Lord, how true ! Thy corrections are all in love, thy trials in mercy, thy chastisements blessed, and just, and right—in kindness and tenderness, as a Father—with wisdom's eye of pity, to restrain, instruct, and subdue. And he has fed thee in the wilderness with manna thy fathers knew not—they only saw it in type, and had it literally, and are dead—thou seest it spiritually, and hast it in substance; for is not Jesus the sum and substance of all the shadows—they, the bread to feed the mortal body—thou, the bread from heaven, to save thy immortal soul—with *that* their bodies died—with *this* thy soul shall live for ever (John vi. 49, 50). To *humble* thy proud flesh has Jesus been set before thee as everything, the all-and-all—and *thou*, sinful, corrupt, vile, polluted, poor, and wretched—as nothing, yea, less than nothing; and only by the grace of God thou art *what* thou art. And that he might "prove thee"—for what, my soul? Take special notice of this—to do thee good at thy latter end. Oh, this is the conclusion of all the mysterious dealings of God with thy rebellious nature. Again, I say, ponder over these words, and see if thy wilderness condition be not contained therein; and dost thou not believe, though not always taking comfort therefrom, that all thy trials, and humblings, and provings, are to be eventually for thy good; and while we praise thee, Lord, for preventing and delivering mercies, let us praise thee for chastening mercies—love thee more the more thou correctest, and kiss the rod which is used for the good of thy children—though there be no *saving* efficacy therein, for glory and praise to thy dear Son,

the Lamb slain, the sacrifice accepted—salvation is complete in our Eternal Surety.

JULY 22.—*And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wert angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid, for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.*—Is. xii. 1, 2.

“And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee.” In what day? and who is it that shall praise the Lord? How comprehensive is “*that day*,” in what a variety of ways do I behold it. Look, my soul, first at that *day*, that wonderfully awful, yet most glorious day, when the whole Church might well utter this prophetic ejaculation, with the subsequent confession and acknowledgment of that important day when Jesus shed his blood on Calvary, to redeem his Church, his beloved bride, from the just anger of God. Well might she praise thee, O Lord, when thine anger was turned away, and thou didst comfort her; when she saw Jehovah as her strength and salvation; when thou wert reconciled to thy fallen people, by the one only and all-sufficient sacrifice of him in whom thou wert well pleased. And is there not a day when individually the members praise thee; when *they* are reconciled to *thee*? when, having felt the curse of sin, they see the Lamb that blots it from *thy* sight, O Lord Jehovah; they feel the power of pardoning love, and are comforted, and can say, “God is my salvation, I will trust, and not be afraid.” Then Jehovah is thy song as well as thy strength. And are there not special days, when special members praise thee, O Lord; when, having *seen thy face* as it were in anger, it is

turned unto them in love? Then there is the whole gospel day, from the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem, to the coming of the Son of Man in power and great glory. Here may the Church continually (until he come again) "with joy draw water out of the wells of salvation." Yes, my soul, as the vessels are brought in they draw the living waters; they receive life from the dead—and when the captives feel free, with joy indeed do they draw from, and feed and feast on him who liveth for ever.

JULY 23.—*And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died.*
—JOSHUA xxiv. 29.

Might not carnal reason be led to say, "Is *this* all that can be said of such an eminent character as Joshua?" But my soul has been led to see the beauty, the simplicity, the force of Scripture language, in this simple eulogy on Joshua. Is there any earthly advancement that can honour a sinful worm of the earth more than being "the servant of the Lord?" And does a servant of the Lord desire more than this? Can any praises, couched in all the eloquence of speech, be more pleasing to the ear, more dear to the heart, more gratifying to the soul, than this? Oh, there is something so heavenly to my ear in these few words, "THE SERVANT OF THE LORD!" This implies the all of Christian obedience and love; the servant *appointed* by the *Lord* shall perform all his will; his heart, his strength, his services, are given to him who thus honours his creatures; the will is brought into a sweet subjection, the powers are devoted willingly to the *Lord*, who moulds them to the form which pleaseth him; and the soul thus moulded, thus led, seeks not

the garbled praise of man, he wants the approval of his God—and if this faithful warrior could know the Scripture record of himself, he would assuredly desire no other praises, seek no other approval, rejoice in no other office than being THE SERVANT OF THE LORD.

JULY 24.—*Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.*—PROV. xvii. 1.

How heartily doth my soul respond to this proverb of the wise man—"A dry morsel and quietness!" Oh how much to be preferred to a house full of sacrifices with strife. Can all the sacrifices that might be offered to the Lord be acceptable to him, whether in the public sanctuary, or the private home, if strife and contention, bitterness and wrath, anger and malice, crown the offerings? Better a dry morsel—alone—in quietness, than all the sacrifices that man can offer, with strife, which must embitter all. My soul would far sooner share a dry morsel with love and union, than join the daily flesh-offerings where hatred reigns and strife rules; where the name of Jesus is professed, but the spirit of love is not followed. What can be said more? It is meditation to which I would draw the soul—not aim at elucidation. Ponder, then, over these words, and may all reflection lead to him in whom is quietness and assurance for ever; who is the one great sacrifice, "and by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

JULY 25.—*My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.*—JOB xxvii. 6.

Oh the Pharisaical self-righteousness of mortal

man! These were awful words for Job to utter; but he was unconscious of the awfulness and boldness of his assertion—boldness, in trusting to his own strength—awful, because if he continued as he resolved, there would be no salvation for his never-dying soul. “My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go,” was the exclamation of the self-justifying Job; he was, as some after him, “going about to establish his own righteousness,” by which he *could not* be saved: and farther, he says, “my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.” By this resolve he virtually casts himself out of the kingdom of God; and thus would every child of Adam do, either by presumptuous sin or by presumptuous righteousness, were it not that God had reserved a seed to serve him; given to the Lord Jesus Christ to redeem with his blood and to cover with *his* righteousness: and when called in time by the constraining and irresistible power of the Holy Spirit, their hearts reproach them, notwithstanding all their fancied integrity; and their own righteousness they find to be but “filthy rags,” and gladly and willingly do they let it go, submitting with brokenness of heart to the righteousness of Christ. To this was the self-righteous Job brought; he abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes. Yes, this self-justifier was shown how weak his resolves, and that *his wills* and *shalls* must give way to the immutable wills and shalls of Jehovah. Hear the words of the Lord Jesus, ye who profess to believe in him, yet deny the election of grace: “All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me, and whosoever cometh I will in no wise cast out.”

JULY 26.—*Set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord.*—2 CHRON. XX. 17.

How soul refreshing is it to have a message from the Lord, and how sweetly does the believer, with faith given him of God, rest, trust in the promise, and must prevail. Look at it, my soul—meditate, reflect that the same God is over Judah and Jerusalem still; and hast thou not proved to thyself that it is so? “Ye shall not need to fight in this battle.” What a blessed assurance! “Fear not, nor be dismayed.” Oh, when such promises are applied to the soul, mountains are made plains, and crooked things straight. “To-morrow go out against them.” Here is the Lord’s bidding—“for the Lord will be with you;” then the battle—the victory shall—must—be ours; and so it proved to Jehoshaphat. He sought counsel of the Lord, received a promise—an admonition—believed, obeyed, resorted to the means commanded, and prevailed in the strength of the Lord. Thus my soul would act, thus exhort Judah, seek the Lord, move not until he bid, trust when he give the faith, stand still until he say “Forward,” but halt not when he by his word or promise bid thee move. Such should be the position of the Church; the enemies are creeping out of their holes. Oh, Judah, stand still, seek thy God, wait the message, take the promise, stay till the word come “to-morrow.” Lord Jesus, in thy strength we thy Israel shall be more than conquerors.

JULY 27.—*And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s.*—LUKE XX. 25.

What wisdom is displayed in this simple act of our blessed Lord! “The (fancied) wise shall be taken in

their own craftiness." Oh how have I pondered the wisdom so simply exemplified, and so conformed to the children of this world; and what attention to the children of God. Ah! do not mix the holy and profane things. Render to Cæsar the world—the duties the world requires, while ye love the world; "honour to whom honour is due, tribute to whom tribute"—all in the fear of the Lord, God that which is due to him, separate and distinct. It is in vain to attempt to mix the dues of Cæsar together—"use this world, and not abuse it." Food and raiment must be provided—the harvest is great, but the labourers are few; but here it ends; the rest is thy Lord's. "If ye love the world, and the things that are in the world, how abideth the love of God in ye?" ye Pharisees, ye stand praying in the market-place, ye reprove the disciples of the Lord for plucking a weed from the field, as they passed through a field on a Sabbath-day—ye strain at gnats and swallow camels—ye are seen of men, but the Father seeth in secret, he that is at the heart, he will not be mocked—he will not be deceived. vain sacrifices, fleshy offerings, half-hearted devotion—world pleasing, flesh-gratifying, self-gratifying sacrifices are an abomination to the Lord, who loveth those "who worship him in spirit and in truth." my soul, "enter not into their secrets." Help me to give me wisdom and power to render to Cæsar what is due, in *thy* sight, and to thee what thou requirest of thy blood-bought family.

28.—*Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that may be accounted worthy to escape all these things it shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son Man.*—LUKE xxi. 36.

gain am I brought, as it were, into the presence of s. He speaks, and my soul would listen to his, and meditate on his words. And to what am I n pausing over this sentence? I first see that I stand before the Son of Man, and am admonished to watch and pray always—to be accounted *worthy* to stand before him? Oh, no, no, Jesus, the worthiness of people is in thyself; neither watching nor praying can make them worthy to stand before thee, nor bring any of his creatures unto him unless he will—but watch and pray that ye may escape all trials that shall come to pass in the last days, before the second coming of the Son of Man. Yes, when thy watch tower, thou must stand before “the Lord of all the earth;” but Jesus is thy Redeemer; he paid thy ransom and thou art free—he will come—expect—believe—trust—the Lord of all rules, the Lord of all shall reign.

29.—*When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.* PSALM lvi. 9.

What a blessed exercise of faith it is to say, “*This I know*,” when the reality of this is felt in the soul, every sigh is hushed—every murmur quieted—every doubt removed; and when the Lord puts the cry into the heart, surely it is a token for good: “then shall the enemies turn back, *this I know*, for God is for me,” the psalmist could say in holy confidence. And what, O, can harm, if God be for us—all things may

floor;" trials fade into a shadow, all things at the feet, and the reality is enjoyed before the comes. This is precious faith—"the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Yes, the enemies shall turn back—"this I know, God is for me." Blessed assurance! and as it is given, so certainly shall the thing come to all shall be accomplished—for "God is for me," my soul, can doubt or dismay arise when thou realize this? Canst thou murmur, yet say, 'for me?' Yes, thou canst say any—even rebel and murmur the moment after thou hast unbounded mercies. But what a precious truth—"the Lord changeth not;" he abideth faithful, ever the same, and nought can turn him from the security of the redeemed, the Lord the same from everlasting to everlasting. Glory to his holy name.

thing of the holiness of Deity has passed before the soul, and the spirit of holiness has revealed somewhat of the iniquity of the heart as standing bare in the sight of God—not what appears before a fellow-worm? When sin is sealed upon the conscience by the Almighty power and demonstration of the Spirit, will not the soul be constrained to cry out with the prophet, “all as an unclean thing”? and my righteousness—what is it?—where is it?—yes, “all *our* righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” But what does the pardoned sinner say, *what* and *where* is *thy* righteousness? What! why a glorious garment—a spotless robe—a seamless vesture—immaculate purity—perfect holiness—*this*, sinner, is *thy* righteousness; but not in *thyself*—thou hast nought but filthy rags to cover thee. Then where is this of which thou boastest? Ah, my soul, where can it be? Behold the Lamb of God—behold Jesus Christ the righteous—behold him “who was made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God *in him*.” Yes, in Jesus, and in him alone. Here is plenteous redemption for all his blood-bought race; the righteousness of Jesus covers all their filthy rags, and in his purity they stand accepted and complete. Yea, “we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities have separated us from our God;” but Jesus hath atoned the just for the unjust, that he might bring us home to our Father’s house. The Comforter, whom he hath sent, seals the work, reveals sin, applies the righteousness of Jesus, and giveth peace to the burdened soul; thus “we judge ourselves, and are not judged of the Lord.” Oh then the filthy rags of *self-righteousness*—the loathsome garment spotted with the flesh—the flimsy web of self-spun fancied *good works*—*self-approval*—*self-satisfaction*—*self-*

seeking—self-esteem—all, all are filthy rags; away to the moles and the bats—send it all away with the sins, my soul, and glory only in the glorious garment of thy Saviour's righteousness, which

Hides all my transgressions from view;
sins of iniquity, and sins of self-righteousness. Praise!
praise to Jesus for ever!

JULY 31.—*And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.—*
ISAIAH xii. 4.

I cannot but again remark the unintentional suitability of consecutive meditations. It is to my soul so blessed to be drawn farther and farther into the glories of Jesus. After meditating yesternoon on the filthy righteousness of fallen man, and being led therefrom to contemplate the seat of *true* righteousness, we are brought this day to a glorious passage of the inspired prophet. *This day*, my soul, thou art brought to meditate on "*that day*," the joy and rejoicing of the redeemed of the Lord. Oh for the power of the Spirit to invigorate the soul, to enliven my comprehension, to enable me in some measure to feast on the richness here brought to view! Words are nothing, unless the application be sealed upon the heart; even this blessed text will fall on the ear of some, and pass unheeded; to others it may at one time be blest to the soul, come with sweet application, flow into the heart with power and energy, to the comfort and refreshing of the spiritual man. At other seasons there is an emptiness, a stoical indifference, non-application, hardness of heart; and thus with other blessed truths. Do we not, then, learn to appreciate the power which

applies to the *heart*, and gives us to *feel* as well as to understand? It is not for mortal pen to equal the sublimity of Scripture language, as "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" but it was written *for* mortal man, and my soul would meditate on this inspired portion, and hope to catch a spark of the Spirit's kindling, that may burst into a holy flame of love—of praise—of joy. And this can only be experienced by the guilty, sin-stained, self-loathing soul, as it sees Jesus, in *that* gospel day, revealed as its *own* God and Saviour. The Church is here called to a strain of rejoicing; and methinks the voice of the great apostle speaks a response in the heart to his call to the saints at Philippi, to "rejoice alway, and again I say, rejoice." "In *that* day ye shall say, Praise the Lord." The lofty strains of the prophet point to the God of salvation—"make mention that his name is exalted." And is not the name of Jesus above every name? He is to be exalted above all; he hath redeemed his people—he has brought in—given to them an everlasting righteousness. "O sing unto the Lord, for he hath done wonderful things;" yes, "the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Oh thou inhabitant of Zion—thou saved sinner—thou mystical body of Jesus, "Cry out and shout," for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee. Jesus, Jesus, reigns triumphant; he hath ascended on high; death and the grave he hath vanquished, and will come again in glory unspeakable, and where he is there shall his people be, and reign with him for ever.

AUGUST.

AUG. 1.—*I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me.*—PSALM lvii. 2.

It is most blessed, my soul, to have a cry put into thine heart to "God most high." Oh when trials come in, temptations assail, then the God who performeth all things is cried unto—this is thy continual experience. But I am now led to ponder over these "all things," and to look farther than the daily trials of the new-born soul. Yes, he performeth all things for me, saith the soul—all things for me, saith the Church—all things for me, saith the Beloved of the Father. The Church, the individual member and the glorious Head, are so incorporated, that we cannot separate them. Christ, in his human nature—the Church, in her state of alienation—the believer, under sensitive trials may cry, "He shall send from heaven to save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up." Who is this, but that roaring lion who still goeth about, seeking whom he may devour? Did not Jehovah send from heaven to save his elect? Did he not send his only-begotten Son to redeem them from death, hell, and the grave? Did he not send from heaven angels to strengthen this beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased, when he was struggling with the powers of hell, contending with all the devices of Satan, the powers of darkness, and with the weight of all the sins of those he came to save? Yes, it was the power of Deity put forth at all times to save from the devouring enemy; the same power is exercised now to save from Satan and his legion for God performeth all things for me—and, oh my soul, will he not perform all things to the end? JESUS

on high, mercy and truth are met together
 hain of the lion is tightened—the Comforter
 g the people, and helpeth the cry of the des-
 rith groans that cannot be uttered. The Lord
 e, he will hear their cry, he will chain the
 ry, whether man or devil, and bring to naught
 ry of the oppressor.” This God is our God
 and ever.

—*And they went forth to go into the land of
 an; and into the land of Canaan they came.*—
 xii. 5.

the sovereign power, as well as the decreed
 s of Jehovah, upon which my soul is led to
 e in this movement of the patriarch in going
 the Lord's command) from the land of his
 and from his kindred, to that land which the
 id promised; and he takes his wife and all his
 oe to go into the land of Canaan. It was at
 ding of the Lord, who commands—who speaks
 d, and necessity is laid upon Abraham, and he
 th—not *against* his will, but he is made will-
 id as the sovereign power of the Spirit works
 so shall the sovereignty be manifested in the
 lishment. The declaration of Scripture is so
 so positive—“And they went forth to go into
 d of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they

Thus the word of the Lord is true, the call
 Lord is positive, the work of the Lord is sure.
 er we take up the call into the kingdom of
 or the final summons, when the vile body
 off—left behind—it is each certain. The soul
 s called upon to leave the land of Egypt—leave
 dred—leave all for the land of milk and honey

and precious fruit, into that land shall assuredly come; nothing can stay the work of Almighty power, the eternal decrees of sovereign grace. The land is allotted, the portions divided, long before possession is taken; every redeemed soul—redeemed by precious blood—shall, without a peradventure, be brought to their inheritance—not all the foes of earth and hell combined shall keep one vessel out. Called to the land of promise—ordained from eternity—into the land of Canaan the whole posterity of the father of the faithful shall come. To Jesus be the praise, the victory, the glory. Hallelujah! Amen.

AUG. 3.—*According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord; in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*—EPH. iii. 11, 12.

Well, my soul, thou art brought again to a confirmatory New Testament portion of thy yesterday's meditation; and from reflecting on the certain fulfilment of Old Testament promises, and the decreed purposes of God, we are now led to see *in whom* the purposes began. Yes, "according to the eternal purpose which Jehovah purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Oh, my soul, how blessed it is to be settled in this glorious truth—all things eternally purposed in Christ by Jehovah, who changeth not! My soul, it must be so; *all things must* be according to the sovereign purpose of the Almighty who ruleth in heaven and earth. And how dare the creature he has formed say unto him, "What doest thou?" But these very rebels against his eternal decrees are continually fulfilling them, though unconscious to themselves. Yes, "purposed in Christ Jesus, in whom we have boldness

access, with confidence, by thy faith of *Him*." e over this, my soul! boldness and access, with dence, by the faith of *Him*. *Thy* faith often : but it is the faith of Jesus I would rest on for ort, as well as for meditation. If faith be given ercise, it is thy gift, O Lord; but this faith may hen the confidence rests entirely on the faith of : so that whether the faith of the members be ercise or not, the faith of *Him* is ever the same, n *this* we have boldness and access with confi- . Yes, blessed Lord, when faith is given to see thee, *by* thee, *through* thee, *from* thee, then the ests, not upon faith bestowed as the *procuring* , but upon Jesus, the immutable rock, as the all everything; and the gift of faith, the approp- ng grace by which the blessings treasured up in are realized—enjoyed of the everlasting por- oy the faith of *Him*. This is confidence. And we have boldness and access—we approach the r without fear—we gain admission through the the Spirit helping our infirmities, taking of the s of Jesus, and showing them to us in their ful- and freeness, firmness and eternity. Oh, my all thy hopes for eternity were in the eternal es in Christ Jesus—they cannot fail; mysteries ere hidden are now made manifest in Jesus— ysteries which remain will be manifested by the from heaven—"this same Jesus, who will de- in like manner as he ascended," when he will to be glorified in his saints, and destroy the ed" with the breath of his nostrils, according rnal purpose, purposed in himself before the began. Amen—*so be it*.

AUG. 4.—*For the Lord your God is he that
you, to fight for you against your enemies
you.*—DEUT. xx. 4.

The promises given to ancient Israel are blessedly experienced by the spiritual Israel applied with sweet realizing power, for the casting and strengthening of a poor cast down soul is the soul brought very low, flesh and spirit sinking into the earth, looking in human reason—looking at, and calculating trials which surround on every side. The Lord is often pleased to leave his children for a while to themselves, to teach them their weakness; to deavour to fight the enemies in their own strength and lose battle after battle, until they learn they have no power or might of themselves. Oh precious then is such a promise as this applied by the Spirit; the soul sinks into the sight of self, and casting itself bare and before the Lord, rests with passiveness on him. How blessed to behold armies and legions against thee, yet to hear the sweet sound coming to thy heart—"Be not afraid of them!" for "the Lord thy God is with thee." Yes, the Lord that brought ancient Israel out of Egyptian darkness and thee out of Egyptian darkness, he "gives thee strength to fight for you" against those enemies whom thou canst not overcome in thine own strength. What, my soul, is the sure result? He saves thee; for he goeth with thee. It is not thy believing, nor thy doing, but the Lord that saves thee; and as surely as he fights for thee, he will he save thee. When we realize by faith the promise, say with confidence, "The Lord is on my side."

not fear," then comfort flows into the soul, and "we lie passive in his hands." But glory to the immutability of our God—the God of Israel—he fights, when we have neither comfort from his promises nor expectations from his power. He may withhold the comfort of believing, when he means to bestow the blessing needed. Thy God, my soul, is ever the same, faithful to his promise, mighty to save, and assuredly shall conquer. Place thine enemies in his hands, fight them not in thine own strength, whether foes without or foes within; if thou canst say, "My God is with me," then thou mayest confidently add, "Be not afraid." The God of Israel is the same—the God of Jacob our refuge—the God of Abraham our Father—the seed of David our Deliverer and King, our God manifest in the flesh, who fought and conquered, died and saves.

AUG. 5.—*I was dumb, I opened not my mouth: because thou didst it.*—PSALM XXXIX. 9.

For the soul that rebels against the Lord's will—fights against his purposes—murmurs at his trying providences—is impatient under afflictions, to be brought to utter these words with power felt in the heart and deep humiliation, is, most assuredly, a blessed exercise for the strengthening and refreshing of the spiritual life. And what but the power of the Almighty can bring a rebellious soul to this passive position—"I was dumb, I opened not my mouth?" I was brought to submit, to be silent before thee, "because thou didst it." I see thy hand—acknowledge thy power and right to act according to thy good pleasure; and thou hast brought me to say, "Thy will be done." "Thou didst it," therefore it must be

right, and just, and good. "*Thou didst it,*" therefore it must be for my soul's benefit; the trials came from thee, and I am dumb. We seldom see the mercy in the trial, until it be past; and often look with bitterness on a fellow-sinner whose conduct has wounded us, when we should bless the Lord, who may be weaning us from an idol, or humbling the pride of our heart. It is a precious exercise to see the Lord's hand in all our tribulations, and to say, "*Thou didst it;*" and let me bless thee and praise thee with my whole heart.

AUG. 6.—*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*—

PSALM xxiii. 1.

Oh, blessed portion! My soul, canst thou act faith here? Canst thou say from thy heart, "*The Lord is my shepherd?*" Is he thine only God, thine only Saviour, and thine only Friend? My shepherd! oh sweet and precious name! Doth he watch thee, feed thee, lead thee forth into green pastures—call thee by name, place thee in his fold, and call thee his? And when, as unconscious as the silly sheep of his presence, is he still by thee, supplying thy wants, and guarding thee from the ravening wolves? And if thou stray from the fold, doth he seek thee out, and gently draw thee to him—or, may be, finding thee wounded among the thorns—entangled in the briars—doth he take thee to his bosom, or gently lead thee back to the fold; does he bind up thy wounds, and speak comfortably to thee? Oh, precious, precious shepherd of thy sheep! Yes, "*the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want*"—neither food, which the world knoweth not of, nor water flowing from the river of life—nor shalt thou want care at all times, guidance in all

difficulties, and watchfulness by night and by day. Thou shalt not want a glorious garment to cover thy deformity, nor a crown of glory to deck thy brow; thou shalt not want any good thing, thy need shall be supplied out of the fulness of thine all-sufficient shepherd. The Lord, the God of Israel, is still the shepherd of his selected people. David's Lord is the Christian's Lord, "the God of Israel and Saviour thereof"—"My Lord and my God!" Pause, my soul, to admire the greatness of redeeming love; the special as well as the general favour of free grace; *this*, to the whole Church—*that*, to thine individual self. Oh how transcendently blessed to *know* thy shepherd, and to have thy wants supplied for eternity.

Oh "Jesus, Shepherd, Husband, Friend,"

To sweetest pastures lead

My sinking soul, so cold and dead,

That I may richly feed.

Show me those streams, again—again,

Those living waters, where

My thirsting soul would take fresh draughts,

And cast on thee all care.

The Lord, he is my Shepherd still,

Supplying all my need;

But this is all my comfort now,

By faith on him to feed.

He gives me all I want below,

And faith sees him the same;

He treasures up eternal bliss,

Oh praise his holy name!

AUG. 7.—*From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*—PSALM lxi. 2.

What a mercy it is to feel the spirit of adoption, and to know there is a God, from whom neither dark-

ness nor distance can hide; and when the soul is overwhelmed, to have One to cry unto even from the end of the earth, from whom we would not flee—nay, rather, to whom we would come—on whom we would desire to rest, cast our burden, and open our wounded hearts. No, the soul under the Spirit's power would not hide from the presence of the Lord, as our first parents did. Oh what a change! what a privilege to have a way of access—no longer the fiery law, but the olive branch of peace. We draw nigh with boldness when we can say, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." "*The rock!*" Oh, blessed word to convey to our poor mortal comprehension the immutability of our God! Holy Spirit, lead me to that rock continually; it is there only my soul can find perfect peace, without alloy. That rock has truly been "a shelter" from the stings of conscience, the condemnation of sin, "a strong tower from the enemy." Blessed Lord Jesus! it is thou alone that canst overcome the enemies of souls—thy strength is greater than all—thy word is power, and thy work is sure. "The rock of ages" cannot fail. Oh to feel that Jesus is our "shelter and strong tower!" What then have we to fear? *how can* we fear? Alas, faith fails, and then we look at self, and not at Jesus—at flesh, and not at spirit—at sandy foundations, and not at the immutable rock. But praised be the name of the Most High, he remaineth ever the same—floods cannot prevail against him—nor any power sweep from Jesus those who are *in Him*, who shall be with him for ever and ever.

UG. 8.—*For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church.*—EPH. v. 29.

“As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that ey also may be one in us.” Who can understand e mystery of this glorious union with Christ, the ing head of his one body the Church? Yet it is as e as the Scriptures are true, and the words of our orable Lord can make it.

What a sweet, a blessed contemplation, is that of e Lord’s nourishing and cherishing the Church; their supplies drawn from him, all their strength rived from him, all spiritual food supplied by him. ourishing and cherishing implies all that a tender rent, an affectionate nurse, a loving husband, can for one greatly beloved—all that can be done for e as dear as self, “for no man ever yet hated his n flesh.” The apostle usés the figure of an earthly ion to set before us the oneness of Christ and s Church; “for we are members of his body, his flesh, and of his bones.” Oh, my soul, dost ou realize the comfort of this mysterious, this ernal union—one with Jesus—complete in him? urtaker of all the blessings to which he is heir—rtner with him in all his heavenly treasures—every essing thine of which Jesus is in possession—all y sins atoned for by him—and all his purity, holi-ss, righteousness thine—“comely in his come-ness,” standing before the Father in Jesus, and not thou art in thyself; thy filthy garments exchanged r his glorious robe—made one with him as a bride lorned for her husband. Precious truth! Blessed ord, help thy Church individually to realize more lly *this soul-comforting* portion of thy word—one

with Jesus ! nourished and cherished by him who knoweth no change—"if we change, he remaineth faithful." If we sleep, he neither slumbereth nor sleepeth—if unconscious of his presence, he is still with his Church, ever watchful, nourishing and cherishing it without intermission.

To be with Jesus one,
To be complete in him,
To stand before the Father's throne
Without a spot of sin ;

This, this, my soul, is thine,
If thou'rt redeemed by grace :
And thou in Jesus' robe shalt shine,
And see him face to face.

He nourisheth his lambs,
He cherisheth his bride ;
And by his all-sufficient hand
Her need is all supplied.

AUG. 9.—*I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.*—GEN. xxiv. 27.

There is something very soul-refreshing in contemplating the actions, petitions, and faith of this trusty servant of Abraham's. When he found his prayer answered—when he beheld the damsel before him for whom he had asked the Lord, his first act is to bow the knee and worship, and utter a short and simple thanksgiving ; but what is particularly impressive, is his acknowledgment of "*being in the way*"—"I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." The Lord led me—yes, my soul, the Lord brings into the right way, then leads to the accomplishment of his purposes. He gives the petition to ask for what he purposes to give ; every prayer indited by the Holy Spirit must

surely shall be answered. However flesh may rebel or give way, into that way must we go which of the Lord's appointment; and all that the Lord appoints must be for the ultimate good of his people. cannot the renewed soul review the past, and see some of the way the Lord has led; many paths which have witnessed rebellion, which has been turned to raise—some in days of darkness, which has led to spiritual light—spiritual blessings from the God of Abraham, the father of the faithful? Have no praises passed the lips? No thanksgivings to the God of mercy and truth? Oh, my soul, I would bow the heart, and worship the Lord who has not left us destitute of his mercy and his truth. His mercy has flowed to rebels, his truth maketh wise unto salvation, by the sovereign power of the Spirit, through Jesus our Lord, to whom be praise for ever and ever.

IS. 10.—*When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.*—ISAIAH xli. 17.

Oh precious, precious promise, for the poor and needy! And who are these? There are many "rich and increased with goods;" many full, wanting nothing; many who "have kept all God's commandments from their youth;" many "thanking God they are not as other men:" there are many clothed in purple and fine linen, who fare sumptuously every day—these are not poor and needy. But are there not some who are poor in spirit, seeing the exceeding unfulness of sin, and feeling their need of a better righteousness than any a sinful worm of the earth can

attain unto; who are conscience-stricken and convinced that they have, in the spirit of gospel purity, gospel holiness, gospel perfection—if not in act—broken every one of the commandments under the law; who can say, yea, feel, they are the chief of sinners, and smite the breast, with “God, be merciful unto me?” Who feel they are empty, wanting all, in wanting the one thing needful, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Oh blessed position, when the Lord the Spirit has brought the soul to hunger for the living bread—to thirst for the waters of everlasting life—to feel that they are “wretched, poor, miserable, blind, and naked.” They seek bread and water, but there is none upon earth that can satisfy; the tongue faileth for thirst, then they cry unto the Lord: they are like the parched ground, seeking for that well of which if they drink they shall live for ever. What saith the Lord? “I the Lord will hear them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them.” Oh ye poor and needy, blessed are ye. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost—to call the sinner, not the righteous, to repentance. Jesus came to bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captive, and open the prison to them that are bound. “If the Son make you free, then are ye free indeed.” Rejoice, then, oh my soul, in the great work of salvation by Christ Jesus. The poor and needy shall not seek the Lord in vain; for he is a God that is nigh, and not afar off. He will hear the cry coming from a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and will give the sweet healing waters of Bethlehem, by which the soul shall live; that water which Jesus alone can give, and which shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life. These are the poor and needy who shall

worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

AUG. 11.—*And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory.*—ISAIAH XXV. 7, 8.

Thy meditations, oh my soul, must centre in the Lord Jesus, whether we contemplate his first or his second advent. He is the destroyer—he is the revealer, but the end is not yet; all enemies are not yet put under him; the “covering that is cast over all people, and the vail spread over all nations,” are not yet destroyed,—therefore we must look to what is yet future in these words of prophecy. And do not the words of the inspired apostle confirm the view of that which is in reserve? *Then* shall be brought to pass that saying—(*then*, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption)—death is swallowed up in victory. Therefore is my soul led to contemplate the consummation of all things. The glorious work was begun on Calvary’s mount, which leads to the blessings which are reserved for all who love the appearing of the Lord. What, oh my soul, are all the treasures of earth; nay, all the trials of this time-state compared to the glory that shall be revealed, when the covering cast over all people, the vail spread over all notions, shall be destroyed. *Then* “he will swallow up death in victory.” *Now* the sting of death is only removed through Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath borne for his Church all that was due for sin; but the effects of sin still exist with the redeemed, who sigh, and weep, and mourn, but “the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.” Rejoice, oh my soul, in the pros-

pect of this, which is to come to pass—all sin, sorrow, pain, grief, suffering, trials from all enemies, all and everything of flesh in the natural body shall be destroyed ; when the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, shall descend, and give the spiritual body which shall never die. Rejoice, I say, in the prospect, “for the Lord hath spoken it.” Amen and Amen.

AUG. 12.—*The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*—ROMANS xiii. 12.

What is the night and the day to which the apostle alludes ? Holy Spirit, do thou open the understanding and give light—spiritual light—to my darkened soul ; for thou only canst cause the shadows of natural knowledge to flee away, and give that spiritual substance which abideth for ever !

The night to which the mind is directed is that spiritual darkness which has pervaded this earth from the fall of our first parents. And is not this the covering—the vail which we saw in our last meditation ? Has not the natural eye been spiritually darkened in reference to the promised seed, from the time the promise was given ? The seed (Gal. iii. 16) which the Spirit alone can *spiritually* reveal. And does not the apostle refer to that day, when all these shall be destroyed ? Oh my soul, darkness, gross darkness, still covers this earth, which the coming of the day of the Lord alone will disperse ; and if in Paul’s time “the night was far spent, and the day at hand,” how much more may we “lift up our heads,” seeing that the day is more than eighteen hundred years nearer : and although “a thousand years with the Lord is but

is one day," viewed by us puny half-sighted mortals, yet shall that day most assuredly arrive, but of the times and the seasons knoweth no man—this is a secret belonging to God the Father only. "In a moment, when ye think not, the Son of Man will come." 'Let us then cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light'—cast off the deeds of the flesh, and walk in newness of life. Holy Spirit, help us, thy people, "to be as those who wait for their Lord." But whether the day be so near at hand, as for any of the present generation of behold the coming of the Lord without passing the valley of death, is not revealed unto us; but *this* we know, the day of death is near to some, and certain to all—the night of this state must close over us at last, and a light shall then shine in upon the soul, either of eternal darkness or eternal light! Then will commence an eternal day of eternal woe or eternal glory! Oh my soul, what hast *thou* in prospect? Lord, if thou judge according to the deeds of the flesh, then am I eternally lost—for one sin in thy holy sight is as amenable to thy justice as a thousand sins; but thy mercy—thy everlasting love—saith, "Here is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This is the Daysman who standeth between God and sinners—in whom the sins of the redeemed are buried—by whom the righteousness of God is imputed unto them (2. Cor. v. 21). Having therefore by faith put on the Lord Jesus Christ, make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Lord, do thou keep me, that I may not stumble—guard me in the hour of temptation—guide me in the time of perplexity—uphold me in the moment of danger—strengthen me in weakness—enlighten me in

darkness, and enable me to ascribe all the glory, all the power, and all the praise, to the One God in a Trinity of Persons, revealed to us in the face of Christ Jesus our Lord.

A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy I sing ;
Nor fear with thy righteousness on,
My person and offering to bring.
The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do ;
My Saviour's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view.

TOPLADY.

AUG. 13.—*Oh, how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.*—Ps. xxxi. 19.

The inspired Psalmist, the sweet singer of Israel, knew something of the height and depth, the length and breadth, of the love of God ; for he had known the depths of sin. And how gloriously does he come out at times, with his harp, as it were, in full tone, to praise the God of his salvation. In the words before us, he extols the goodness of the Lord God of Israel ; and in the same way the New Testament saints join the harmonious choir, to extol the same God who hath in this latter day revealed himself by his Son, and caused all to be one in Christ Jesus, in whom there is neither Jew nor Gentile.

Yes, my soul, I would say, "Oh how great is thy goodness !" And yet in these fleshly bodies we cannot comprehend its infinity, for it passeth understanding ; but the infinite store is laid up for them that fear thee, "which is wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men."

Thy power, O God, shines forth in the splendid works of thy creating hand ; but thy great goodness

beams most transcendently through the darkness of this sinful world, in thy work of redemption wrought out fully, freely, unreservedly for those who trust in thee. "No man can by any means give a ransom for his brother." No mortal can or could atone for sinful man, himself being sinful; no arm of flesh can help a wretched sinner; no sinner's blood could ever appease divine justice; in man, fallible man, there can be no real trust. Thy great goodness then, oh Lord, is in thy wondrous work of redemption; to Jesus must the soul continually turn, and with holy fear and reverence, under the power of filial love, trust in him for *all* the goodness laid up for time and eternity, which is ever flowing, and is inexhaustible—and with the Psalmist let us say, Amen and Amen.

AUG. 14.—*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing; that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.*—
ROMANS XV. 13.

How blessed—how inconceivably and inexpressibly blessed—it is to the soul, when a word comes with *power*; when the tear starts to the eye; when the full heart seems surcharged, and a joy breaks in upon the dark path, like a gleam of the glorious sun bursting from under a dense cloud. Such, oh my soul, are the effects of these words of the highly-favoured Paul, "written by inspiration of God." Blessed Lord, there is no true abiding joy or peace separate from thyself. Thou art the God of all hope, all peace, all love; and only as the eye is fixed *in hope* upon *Him* in whom we believe *through the power* of the Holy Ghost, do we *abound in hope*, and are filled with joy and peace

All that might be written could not flow into the soul with power, unless applied by the holy Spirit. When the all-sufficiency of Jesus is applied then do we abound in hope; when unbelief prevails, then are we driven to despair: for a sensible sinner without a Saviour is the most wretched object upon this earth. But, blessed be God, he will not leave us comfortless, he will never forsake the sheep of his pasture; but if he hide his face for a little moment, he will return. O Lord, what a mercy to be brought to see *Thee* unchangeable, so that if there be no joy, there is peace; and if there be not a fulness, there is not an emptiness; if we walk not by *sight*, we walk by *faith* on the Son of God. Yes, Jesus, Jesus remaineth the same—he cannot change. This, my soul, is thy hope, thy joy, thy peace; this the anchor in thy soul—Jesus the eternal rock which cannot be moved; here only canst thou rest in peace, when the joys of salvation have ceased. Oh joyful sound, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

AUG. 15.—*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*
—LUKE ix. 23.

What is it, my soul, to deny thyself? Lord, speak, for thy servant would spiritually understand thy word. It was not, most assuredly, “in meat and drink, or respecting holy days, which were a shadow of things to come, and which puffeth up the fleshly mind” (Col. ii. 16—23), that our Lord meant by denying one’s self. No, no, something far from this, is to deny thyself. All the works done in the flesh—all the denials and mortifications inflicted on the flesh, are not a denial of self, but an idolizing of self. Deny thy self.

ghteousness, thine own works and doings, and follow
 xus as thine entire Saviour. Yes, and take up thy
 oss daily, and follow Jesus. Have not all the re-
 med family a cross to bear? And dost *thou*, my
 ul, carry it patiently? Art thou ashamed of Jesus?

The cross is sometimes too mighty for flesh to bear;
 and did not the Lord uphold and support, the flesh
 ould sink under it: but if thou follow Jesus, he will
 alp thee; if thou follow him fully, thou canst not
 it deny thyself—all thine own fancied good deeds
 e laid at the foot of the cross, with all thy sins, the
 urden of which, did they come upon thee according
 justice, thou couldst not bear, they would crush
 ee to atoms, “would grind thee to powder;” but
 e cross of thy Redeemer, when faith sees *Him* as all,
 everything, thou canst bear cheerfully, if he be
 eased to whisper to thy soul, “It is for my sake.”
 i esteem it a blessed privilege, not only to believe
 him, but to suffer for his sake.

UG. 16.—*God is our refuge and strength, a very pre-
 sent help in trouble.*—PSALM xlv. 1.

Oh when the soul is in sweet and believing exer-
 ise, what a privilege to realize the comfort of such a
 ord as this. God, the great, the high, the Holy One,
 r refuge and strength! a very present help in
 ouble! Is not all, and everything, of *real* import-
 ce comprised in these few words? If God be our
 fuge, what can we fear? if our strength, how can
 e fail? if a present help, why should any trouble
 moy? Oh when the soul feels the power of this pre-
 ous truth, we ride on our high places, we rejoice in
 ulation, and sing in the lion's den, or in the midst
 the fire. But *He*, the Lord Jehovah is our refuge,

our *strength*, our *help* at all times; but we do not at all times realize the comfort—we are fallible, HE is infallible—we sink into unbelief, but HE is an unvarying refuge; and will never forsake us, world without end. Amen again and again.

AUG. 17.—*It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord.—*
2 CHRON. v. 13.

The types and shadows of the Old Testament having been blessedly fulfilled, and revealed to us, in the New Testament, we are privileged to look within the vail, to see an enduring substance, a “temple not made with hands,” a “city, whose builder and maker is God;” an “altar, whereof they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle.” The sacrifices and ceremonies under the law having had their end fulfilled, the yoke of the law is taken off, and those “whom the Son makes free, are free indeed;” their “yoke is easy and their burden light.” But often is the position of the Church in the wilderness applied unto the soul in a spiritual signification, and we gather sweetness from that which is dead.

The visible Church, under the old dispensation, being typical of the true, and *now invisible*, Church, there is a harmony in it, which is lost to the *visible* Church under the new dispensation. To this harmony we are led while meditating on our Scripture portion. Could we not look beyond the existing visible Church,

assuredly we should feel but little comfort; discords and divisions abound, but, blessed be God, we *now* look to that which is not seen, and in this oneness of sound, of praise, and thanksgiving, recognize the one Church of our glorious Head, and the soul seems to feast in the thought that a period is to come when the "ONE CHURCH" shall surround the throne of the Lamb, and, in the most glorious harmony, shall with one voice sound eternal praise to Him who hath redeemed us and washed us in his blood. But there is a union which we do not see—a harmony which we do not feel—one sound which we do not hear, *except by faith*; it is one body complete in Jesus, and all unite in naming *his* name, by which alone we can be saved. There is an invisible union—one body of many members, all occupying their appointed station, *one* in the Father and the Son (1 Cor. xii.; John xvii. 21). All are perfect, complete, and glorious in the spiritual head; by one Spirit are all baptized into one body; all that comes from that Spirit must harmonize; all discord is of the flesh; the same sound, the same praise, proceed from the self-same Spirit. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Blessed reflection; glorious, precious heart-warming meditation. Perfect in Jesus—one with Him—accepted in the Beloved, in whom the one body stands complete before the Father. One sound has gone forth unto the ends of the earth, "glad tidings of great joy." Salvation by free grace through Jesus Christ; and the redeemed shall unite with one heart in songs of deliverance from the law—songs of praise to him who hath redeemed us—songs of triumph over death, hell, and the grave—songs of victory to him

that sitteth upon the throne, and to the
ever. Hallelujah !

AUG. 18.—*For I know the thoughts that I
wards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace
of evil, to give you an expected end.*—JER.

Here we have an Old Testament promise to
ral captives of Judah, which to my soul is
applied as a revelation of the mind of Jehovah
glorious gospel brought to light in the New
ment. Peace by one only sacrifice was pro-
in paradise, and the love of God was set
elect Church before the foundation of the world
my soul, to what unlimited boundaries of
range; the mind seems lost in the extent of
time. Time and eternity present themselves
everlasting love of God—thoughts of peace
of evil, from eternity to his elect—proclaim
peace by Jesus Christ in the fulness of time
individual soul-travail from the revelation of
the wrath of God seemed ready to burst upon
victed soul, and evil appeared to be all the
intend, or the soul deserve; but the peace-
blood of Jesus, applied by the blessed Spirit
claimed—“my thoughts are peace”—and
flowed in like a river”—then came the expec-
—and still, my soul, the expected end is
Eternity! oh eternity! lies before thee;
expected end is to “depart and be with Christ
lie down a vile body, and rise a glorious
awake up in the likeness of Jesus, and see him
is. Oh blessed anticipation! Glorious moment
By the power of the Spirit we seek the Lord
most assuredly find him when we search with

pts. "Ye *shall* seek me, and find me." "All ; the Father giveth to me shall come to me," h Jesus. "A broken and contrite heart I will despise." "A new heart will I give thee." Grace over sovereign grace ! and love—eternal love ! absorb soul. I can but look, and wonder, and adore. ce in the mind of God, while war and rebellion n in the heart of man, until Almighty power is forth, and the rebel is brought—the love of ist constraining—to the foot of the cross, to cry, nclean, unclean," and Jesus all in all. Here is tterness the heart only knoweth, and a joy a nger intermeddeth not with." Peace, peace, by blood of the Lamb.

G. 19.—*The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and longer.*—JOB xvii. 9.

Whatever might have been Job's ideas of a righteous 1, the Christian—renewed by the Spirit of l—knoweth that he alone is righteous whose teousness is of the Lord ; he who is complete in as, accepted in the Beloved. And he shall hold his way, for the Lord is his guide ; and not one be lost that is united by covenant love to the y of the glorious Head. He that is washed in blood of Jesus "is clean every whit ;" and as 1 becomes weaker and weaker, the soul waxes nger and stronger in Jesus. Man's strength is 'ect weakness ; the weakness of the Lord is per-strength : and with the apostle, we "can do all gs through Christ strengthening us." Without 1 we can do nothing. Oh for more weakness in , that the power of Jesus may rest upon us ; for

it is the power, the strength, the guidance, the sovereignty, of Him in whom "we live, and move, and have our being;" and to Him, Jehovah Jesus, be all the praise.

AUG. 20.—*He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.*—PSALM ci. 7.

The New Testament is most assuredly the golden key which unlocks the mysteries of the rigorous law dispensation, as set forth to us in the Old Testament. If we resolved with the Psalmist, surely we must dwell alone; and *then* our own hearts and tongues would bring us under condemnation. The Scriptures of truth declare that the heart is deceitful, and that man goes astray from the womb, speaking lies: experience and observation confirm this truth, and we must turn to the Testament of Jesus Christ, and to the testimony of his apostle under the teachings of the Spirit, to show us the distinction of law and gospel—the one of works, requiring perfect obedience and an unsinning holy life—the other of grace, which giveth faith to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only way to everlasting life. The third chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans fully satisfies my soul on this point. The entire sinfulness of man by nature—the holy requirements of the law, beyond the possibility of *human* nature to attain unto—and the alone way of access to God, and justification in his sight, are all plainly revealed by the pen of the inspired apostle, that "he who runs may read" and understand, if not wholly spiritually blind. The words of the Psalmist, therefore, must imply something beyond the letter; and we look

from David to David's Lord, in whom we see the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and in whom alone perfection dwelleth—whose heart alone, of all who ever trod this earth, was without deceit, and whose lips uttered nought but truth—and in *His* righteousness alone can fallen man enter the house of the Lord, or tarry in the sight of God, for there is the perfection and holiness of Deity. Jesus only, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt, could fulfil the divine law—*human* nature can never be perfect while it inhabits a corruptible body; it is in the divinity of Jesus in union with his humanity that we behold a perfect and complete Saviour. Let then by constraining grace, O Lord, be with us thy redeemed Church; that, seeing our imperfections, we may look unto thee for strength in all our weaknesses, patience in all our trials, submission to thy will, and to thee only and entirely for an abundant entrance into thy heavenly and eternal kingdom of glory. Amen—even so, Lord Jesus.

AUG. 21.—*Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.*—JER. xvii. 5—7.

The curses and blessings of the law of works were without reservation; the arm of justice was laid bare, and there could be no mitigation in its requirements, or then it would become mercy. A blessing and a curse were set before the Israelites by Moses; and fount Gerizim and Mount Ebal remain to this day as monuments against the rejectors of their promised Messiah, who reject the law of love, and scoff at

mercy's call, and stumble at the only way of attaining a heavenly, eternal inheritance.

My soul, thou canst only now contemplate the curse as taken away, nailed to the cross upon which Jesus was made a curse for thee; and the curses of Mount Ebal no longer rise in judgment against those who believe in Jesus—who trust not in man, nor in arms of flesh—whose hearts have been renewed by the Spirit's power, and, trusting in the Lord as their hope, their all, inherit the blessing prepared from everlasting for all the redeemed, whether Jew or Gentile, to whom the sweet message of mercy cometh. Justice is silenced, and the law satisfied by Jesus Christ the righteous; sovereign grace is richly displayed, and we have nought to “glory in save the cross of Christ:” for “blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.”

AUG. 22.—*Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*—MATTHEW v. 11.

Now, my soul, turn thy thoughts to the words of thine adorable Lord, and see one of the blessings upon which thy last meditation rested—“Blessed are ye when reviled and persecuted, and all manner of evil spoken against thee *falsely*”—mark this, *falsely*, for Jesus' sake—“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad.” Jesus spake to his disciples; and doth he not still speak by the written word, the pen of inspiration? Are not believers in Jesus still disciples? But where are the revilings—where the persecutions in the present day—and where the faithful disciples of Jesus? Lord, the blessings are all treasured up in thyself; thy disciples are too compromising, and the world too liberal

for the exercise of suffering for thy sake; and our only rejoicing is in *thee* and thy great salvation, while we follow thee silently—spiritually feasting on the blessings thou hast procured, and rejoicing inwardly that thou art all, and we debtors to sovereign grace.

AUG. 23.—*Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes. . . . And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee.*—DEUT. xxvi. 17, 18.

Again we are brought to meditate on the law given by Moses, which causes us to rejoice in the surpassing glory of the gospel by Jesus Christ; the one a servant, the other a Son; the law served until the Son came upon earth to fulfil it. Israel promised what they could not perform; for no mortal man dare promise and vow to keep God's holy commandments; but the Lord was faithful to his promise. Israel brake these vows, and cast the statutes behind their back; therefore the Lord has cast them off. Still he has his peculiar people, whom he will make high above all nations in praise, in name, and in honour. His spiritual Israel cannot keep themselves—they dare not make a vow—they know they cannot keep the holy statutes of the Lord—they look unto their head—they rest in his love—they live by faith in the Son—are dead to the law, and bring forth fruit unto God through Jesus Christ alone. Blessed be God, the Son abideth for ever; the servant is no more. The Son is an eternal high priest, and a king who shall reign in righteousness; the law-magnifier and the law-fulfiller—the one perfect sacrifice—the real paschal lamb—and ever liveth to intercede for his own perfect body

AUG. 26.—*And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.*—JUDGES i. 28.

Here is a breach of God's commands for thy meditation. And what a lesson doth it contain! Israel disobeys the Lord, and he gives them up to the fruit of their own doings. Israel becomes strong, and feels greater pride in making the Canaanites tributaries, than in destroying them according to the word of their God. They act under flesh, and to flesh are given up. The Canaanites become snares; and being left to prove Israel, prove in truth what man has been, and what man still is: he prides himself on his strength and self-righteousness, braves temptation, and falls a prey. Thus spiritual Israel is brought to see the weakness of flesh; and that only as God upholds and strengthens, can the Canaanite be made even tributary. They are the enemies of the spiritual man; thorns in the side and idols in the heart, from which, O Lord, deliver us in time, as thou hast done for all eternity.

AUG. 27.—*Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.*—PSALMS xxvii. 9.

The word of God is a casket of jewels; and at times there is a precious gem, which sparkles out from amidst the treasure, and beams with peculiar lustre: so that it strikes its radiance into the heart, and we feel as if it exclusively belonged to our individual self. Such is the verse before me; I claim it as my own—I feel it as my own, and can with the Psalmist supplicate the Lord with all my heart, with all my soul,

and with all my strength. Thou hidest thy face, O Lord, and I am discomforted; hide it no longer, be not far from me, put not thy servant away in anger: but that, O Lord, that is far from thee—anger is not in thee—but thy rebukes, thy hidings are in love. Yes, thou hast been my help, and faith whispers, thou yet wilt restore unto me the joys of salvation; thou hast been my help in every time of need, and art still my stay and my staff, my hope, and my trust; leave me not, “neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.” Precious faith keeps the hold on Jesus, and *He* changeth not; never will he leave one in whom he has begun the good work: faith apprehends this, but sense has lost the enjoyment of the light of the Lord’s countenance, and the soul mourneth as the lone sparrow on the house-top. Return, O Lord; how long wilt thou hide thyself—how long remain behind the cloud? Wait—“wait on the Lord,” the Psalmist continues, “be of good courage, and he will strengthen thy heart.” Lord, it is faith alone in *thy faithfulness*, that keeps the soul from fainting by the way; and faith is thine own gift. Thou art all and everything; self sinks into less than nothing, and glories in giving all the glory, and honour, and praise, to thee, O Lord, who abideth the same for ever and ever.

AUG. 28.—*Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them, even as many as had not known all the wars of Canaan; only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof.*—JUDGES iii. 1, 2.

We have meditated on the disobedience of Israel; and, pursuing *their history*, we may learn the fearful

results : they intermarried with these heathen nations, learned their ways, and served their gods. In looking at these verses, the mind reverts to Christian experience, and would leave literal Israel to meditate a moment on spiritual Israel. They who read to understand, may the Spirit of the God of Israel bless them to profit, as well as help the writer ; and to be all the praise. All who are renewed by the Spirit enter a field of battle ; but when peace is proclaimed to the sin-stricken soul, there is generally a rest from war for a time : the soul delights itself in him who hath spoken peace, and there is a self-satisfaction in frames and feelings. The Canaanites (or fleshly inclinations of the natural man) appear not only tributary but entirely extinct, and the soul prides itself on its own holiness—*fancied* holiness. Perfection is reserved for immortal bodies ; and the light of the Holy Spirit revealeth the darkness and depravity of a corrupt nature. It pleaseth the Lord that the motions of flesh shall still be felt by those who are under gracious leadings ; and the higher views they have of *his* holiness, the clearer do they behold their own corruptions : human nature is flesh still, the excitement of the first love subsides, the old Adam resumes his place, and the soul feels utterly dismayed at the turn of the old corruption—the warfare begins “that the children of Israel may know, to teach them in at the least such as before knew nothing there. Thus the Lord in wisdom leaves the Canaanites in the land, to prove Israel by them ; to humble their pride, by showing them, when they have gained a little strength, something of the imagery of iniquity within—self is brought down that Jesus may be “that no flesh may glory in his presence,” and t

"he that glorieth may glory alone in the Lord." Thus, my soul, hast thou been taught, thus hast thou been brought down from thy high places, thus hast thou been taught the warfare; and blessed be the God of Israel, who teacheth thee the secrets of the kingdom—who giveth thee to see the two armies, and doth not give thee up to the desires of the Canaanites, that still dwell within thy corrupt house of clay. For restraining grace the glory be unto thee, O Lord; and may my soul with deep humility lie at the foot of the cross, giving to Jesus all, all, all the praise.

AUG. 29.—*By the grace of God I am what I am.*—

1 COR. xv. 10.

How blessedly do the words of the apostle harmonize with our last meditation! How deeply doth my soul feel that all is of grace, and by the grace of God alone are we made to differ! The great apostle of the Gentiles—this marvellous vessel of mercy—boasted of naught but the grace of God. Paul was but a mortal man, distinguished by the grace that was given to him; and here his greatness shines conspicuously, that he glories not in himself—"by the grace of God I am what I am:" and although he knows he laboured more abundantly than all, "yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me." Paul had felt himself "the chief of sinners," therefore the superaboundings of grace were more vividly experienced in his humbled soul: he gloried in the work of his Master, he gloried in the grace of God, he gloried in the cross of his Redeemer. And what can we add to this? Meditate, my soul, on this grace whereby we stand; the more thou seest of the sovereignty of thy God, the more wilt thou be self-humbled—boasting is

excluded, not by the law of works, but by the law of faith; and, with the apostle, we would continually feel in the heart's core, "by the grace of God I am what I am."

AUG. 30.—*God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those that are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.*—PSALM lxxviii. 6.

Is not sovereign grace again set before thee, oh my soul? One is taken and another left, according to the will and pleasure of the great Ruler of all things in heaven and earth. "He setteth the solitary in families;" bestoweth grace as seemeth him good; "bringeth out those which are bound with chains;" making them "willing in the day of his power;" bringing them into the rich pasture of covenant love; giving them "a feast of fat things;" bringing them to the well-spring of life, that they thirst no more—to the fountain of living water—to the new wine that maketh glad the heart—to Jesus the Author and Finisher of all; "but the rebellious dwell in a dry land." And what hath made thee to differ? Sovereign grace! Be humbled then, oh my soul, if thy chains are knocked off; be patient, if solitary, and look unto the God of thy salvation, who will never leave nor forsake those whom he hath "loved with an everlasting love." Bless the Lord, oh my soul!

AUG. 31.—*There are many devices in a man's heart: nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.*
—PROV. xix. 21.

Those who know anything of their own hearts, know that its devices are incalculable. The turnings and windings, twistings and deceptions, plans and

solves, thoughts and intents, are beyond the calculation of finite man. He deviseth, and God bringeth to naught; he appoints, the Lord disappoints: "nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." And doth not the wise man preach God's sovereignty? Wherefore doth man reject this glorious truth? How can he assert the freedom of his own will, when again and again his devices are frustrated? But whatever the mind of man may be, however he may fancy himself a free agent, "the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." There is a beautiful harmony in thy laws, O Lord, which mortals cannot penetrate; an eternal chain, which thou alone seest; link after link is disclosed by time: there can be no discrepancy in thy ways, nor can there be any frustration of thy will. Thy word is yea and amen; thy counsels "ordered in all things and sure;" every event is before thine omniscient eye. "Who then by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty to perfection?" We are to believe where we cannot understand. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," for thy counsel, O Lord, that shall stand for ever and ever. Amen.

SEPTEMBER.

SEPT. 1.—*For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land in Egypt, from whence ye came out.*—DEUT. xi. 10, and two following verses.

This was the land promised to Abraham; the land of Canaan, to which the Lord, the God of Israel, had directed and brought Israel, after their term of servitude in Egypt was ended. We cannot but trace the

Christian life in the view of the "Church in darkness," and meditate with a spiritual application the literal dealings of the Lord with ancient Egypt. Dost thou remember the land of Egypt, my thine Egyptian bondage and darkness, slave toil? Canst thou realize thy deliverance, entrance into the spiritual Canaan—the opening eyes to the hills and valleys—the draughts of water which came down from heaven, to refresh thy thirsty soul, and cheer thy drooping spirit? Canst thou realize this, then art thou blest; and all things of time and sense shall fade from thine eyes and be weaned from thine heart. And this is the will which the Lord thy God careth for; his eye is always upon it, from the beginning to the end; he is ever present; he neither slumbereth nor doth he sleep, but watcheth his sheep by night and by day. Oh for a more vivid realization of this glorious and blessed truth; to feel that the Lord is ever "about thy path and about thy bed;" to live with praises for the mercies past, to arise with thanksgiving for thy help in every time of need, casting thy care upon Jesus—poor and destitute in himself, but rich in him who hath prepared a heavenly kingdom and a crown of glory for all who love him in sincerity and truth.

SEPT. 2.—*My soul, wait thou only upon God, for thy expectation is from him.*—PSALM lxii. 5.

It is very blessed to experience a waiting upon God, and that only upon God; then is the soul above every earthly difficulty, and with the Lord can say, "for my expectation is from him." These are the expectations of the soul that is waiting

d trusting in, the Lord? A few only can be enumerated. In trials expecting deliverance; and that things are working together for good: in adversity, expecting help in every time of need; in prosperity, strength to resist the temptations set before us and all these expectations *only* from God. Yes, y soul, all expectations are *in* the Lord, and *on* the Lord; all that we have to expect is treasured *in* him, all that is experimentally applied cometh *on* him. The reception of grace, the pardon of us, justification by the righteousness of Jesus, eternal glory, are all expectations (before realized) *on* HIM. A glorious resurrection to awake up in *his* likeness, to see him face to face—all, all are expectations from him, the Lord of glory, the God of salvation, the Prince of Peace, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, Jesus Christ the only righteous, the only Saviour, the only hope, the only expectation of broken-hearted sinners. Yes, Lord Jesus, my only expectation, and all my expectation, is from *THEE*. Thou hast done all for eternity; thou must do all in time, from whom alone cometh our help. Glory! glory! to thy glorious name.

SEPT. 3.—*Sing unto the Lord, oh ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.*

—PSALM XXX. 4.

Come, oh my soul, and ye who love the Lord, and join in praises to his holy name. "Sing unto him, oh ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness." Meditate over the whole of this precious Psalm; it is all sweet as the honey, and refreshing as the dew of heaven. "His anger

endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Oh how blessed are the words of truth, when applied with power—blessed to the soul; for without the Spirit's application they are as water spilt on the ground, and the most precious truths are a dead letter. Sing then unto the Lord—this is a song of deliverance; he hath delivered, and he will yet deliver. David could extol the Lord, and cannot the redeemed now extol him? Oh praise him, ye saints of his, for he hath done wonderful things. Praise him for his mercy and his love. Praise him for his free salvation. Praise him for his sovereign grace. Praise him for his mighty acts. Let all with spiritual breath praise the Lord, and glory ye his holy name for ever and ever.

SEPT. 4.—*In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.*—ISAIAH xlv. 25.

Mark well these words, ponder over them, my soul; compare Scripture with Scripture, and we shall have strong confirmation "that they are not all Israel which are of Israel;" "neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children." "That is, they that are the children of the flesh are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Rom. ix. 6—8). Again, "Know ye not, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham?" (Gal. iii. 7). These are the words of the great apostle of the Gentiles; and our Lord proclaimed the same before, when he called Zacchæus the publican; "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham" (Luke xix. 9). This truth is established by

Scripture testimony, that the name of Israel is not confined to the nation of the twelve tribes, the natural descendants of Abraham; we see a spiritual Israel, the spiritual seed, to whom the promise of salvation is confined, however this truth may be rejected by the many. But, blessed be God, there are a few who believe it, glory in it, "living by faith on the Son of God." And here, my soul, is the fulfillment of this precious promise, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Yes, glory that salvation is all in Jesus, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30). "For he (God) hath made him to be sin who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21). Oh the pride of human nature, which desires something of self to glory in, seeks justification in the works of the flesh. But the seed of Israel do not so learn Christ, they are justified in him and glory in him, they rejoice to give him all the praise, they follow him in faith under the law of love; and bring forth the fruits of faith according to the gift of God, who giveth to every one the measure that pleaseth him to bestow: and all the seed are justified in the Lord, and shall glory only in him.

SEPT. 5.— *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.*—
 PHIL. ii. 9, 10.

From our last meditation, we are brought into a full view of the beautiful harmony of the Old and New Testaments. This (unpremeditated) text brings before us the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, proved by the prophet Isaiah in the chapter, a verse of which we

last contemplated. "I am God, there is none else; I have sworn by myself, that unto me every knee shall bow." Thus spake the inspired prophet, and the inspired apostle confirms the equality of Jesus with God—proves that he is God—for there is but one God. The Godhead was veiled in flesh, and took the nature of man to be made sin, that man might be made righteous. Oh great indeed is the mystery of godliness. Jesus hath a name above every name, and to him every knee shall bow; all things shall be brought into subjection to him, all things shall be put under his feet, and "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Here is the glory of the Christian, that Jesus is God and man, one with the Father, and his Church one with him. Oh glorious mystery, not to be comprehended by the puny mind of man, but to be believed in by faith. Blessed Lord, bring my heart to bow with submission to all thy decrees, as thou hast brought it to bow, in deep humility and soul travail, to the glorious truth of thy divinity; so that all the glory of my soul is to glory alone in thee, as the one perfect and complete Saviour of thy body the Church. Glory! glory! to thy holy name.

SEPT. 6.—*Hear ye this, oh house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, which swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness.*—ISAIAH xlviii. 1.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, for reproof, for instruction, &c.; and again are we led to trace the similarity of Israel of old—the then visible Church—to the visible Christian Church now. And

do we not in this verse perceive the lamentable state of the professing Church at this day? What multitudes are called Christians, whom we dare not, cannot believe that they make mention of the name of the Lord in truth and righteousness. "Grace be with all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," saith our beloved brother Paul. Oh it is grace, grace, that makes the difference; whether Jew or Gentile, infidel or professing Christian, there is no love in sincerity to Jesus, no making "mention of the God of Israel in truth and righteousness," but by the grace of God in the heart; here must be seated the power of God by his Holy Spirit: lip-confession, head-knowledge, will not suffice, the Lord looketh at the heart, and not at the height of stature or outward beauty. God will not be mocked; a time will come when all shall be made manifest, and it will be proved that the Lord alone "knoweth them that are his." "Search me and try me, O Lord," and prove me, and help me fully to realize that I love thee, O Lord, in truth and righteousness.

SEPT. 7.—*Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*—2 COR. vii. 1.

One part of Scripture cannot, by the verity of God's word, contradict another; so that we dare not view these words as favouring the free-will system of man, or supporting the Arminian scheme of perfection in the flesh. "Without me ye can do nothing;" "all power is of God;" "when I would do good, evil is present with me," are some, among the many parts of holy Scripture, which refute the Arminian's creed.

We look to the former chapter, and there see the promises and cleansings specified; "touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you;" let us cleanse ourselves from the filthiness of idol worship, perfecting holiness in the fear of God:" perfecting that holy calling wherewith he hath called us, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim. i. 9). Lord, do thou open the eyes of my darkened understanding, by thy blessed Spirit, that I may not wrest Scripture, nor reject any part of thy precious word. While I contemplate the heathen idols, help me to cast all the idols of the heart at the feet of Jesus, that he may reign supreme, perfecting my holy calling with filial, not slavish fear, by living a life of faith on the Son of God, mortifying the deeds of the flesh; but never to be satisfied with self. And when I awake up in thy likeness, and see thee as thou art, then shall I be satisfied in the full fruition of my hope and faith; then shall I be perfected for ever in the love of the Lord.

SEPT. 8.—*Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth that I am the Lord.*—JER. ix. 23, 24.

The Lord speaketh, but doth man hear or understand? He warns, but doth man forbear? Let us look around, and what do we see but self-glory? The wise glorying in the wisdom which is foolishness with God; the mighty glorying in the strength, which is perfect weakness; the rich, glorying in the riches,

h cannot purchase one moment's peace on earth, and inheritance in heaven. Some are glorying in themselves in self-righteousness; but not one glorifieth in the Lord until brought to the foot of the cross, as a poor, destitute sinner: and the Lord himself must forth his Almighty power to bring the heart of every man under subjection to his will. When sin is in its deformity, and the heart by the light of the Spirit, man no longer glories in himself, but glories in the Lord, who hath redeemed him; and then he understandeth and knoweth who is the Lord. He no longer "confers with flesh and blood;" and though many may have known Christ after the flesh, yet when he comes to glory in him, he knows him so no more; he knows him only after the Spirit, knows him as the Lord who exerciseth loving-kindness, judgment, righteousness on the earth:" knows him as the Father who delighteth in his own holy law. The redeemed soul also delighteth in the law of God after the inner man; though to fulfil it he finds not the strength; but the will is present with him, so that he longs to glory in the "Lord Jesus, who of God is sent unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption." Thus the apostle confirms the promise, "that according as it is written, he that glorieth in himself glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. i. 30, 31).

Compared with thee, O God, most high,
 All things of earth are dung and dross;
 Help me to live, help me to die,
 In glorying only in thy cross.

Jesus, by whom we live and move,
 By whose almighty power we stand
 Accepted, by eternal love,
 To reign with thee at God's right hand;

To thee be honour, glory, praise,
For thy salvation full and free ;
Tune our dull harps, our hearts to raise,
To glory only, Lord in thee.

SEPT. 9.—*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear ; but of power, of love, and of a sound mind.*—2 TIM. i. 7.

My soul, how sweetly does the experience of the believer harmonize with holy men, who spake in times past as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ; these were men compassed with infirmities as we are at this day ; men of like passions with ourselves, but the same Spirit, who giveth grace to all the members, but not gifts, in like measure. How is my soul then confirmed by these words of the apostle, in the leadings of the mind, when meditating so recently on his word to the Corinthians. No, no, God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry " Father ; " the spirit of power, by which we are brought to believe in the *heart* in the Lord Jesus ; the spirit of love which casteth out fear ; and God is no longer a consuming fire, as under the law of Sinai, but the God of love, who has brought us to " Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant and the blood of sprinkling, which cleanseth from all sin ; " the spirit of a sound mind, receiving the Lord Jesus in all meekness, and sitting at his feet as the man among the tombs, " clothed and in the right mind ; " " clothed upon with our house from heaven ; " " receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved ; " and under the law of love we " serve God acceptably, with holy reverence and godly fear."

SEPT. 10.—*O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man who trusteth in thee.*—PSALM lxxxiv. 12.

The one only true God, the God of Israel is styled the "Lord of Hosts." One appeared unto Joshua, and called himself the Captain of the host of the Lord. Jesus is called the Captain of our salvation. "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy," saith the Captain of the Lord's host unto Joshua. The Lord Christ is then the One by whom the invisible God spake from the beginning, by whom a revelation was made of the power of Godhead veiled in flesh; in whom only can man behold God and live. Is not Jesus the king of glory? Who is the king of glory? The Lord of Hosts; he is the king of glory. Then blessed is the man who trusteth in Jesus. Thou and the Father are one, declared by thine own mouth. Thou art the only way of access unto him who is invisible; the only way of reconciliation; the highway of holiness; and none can err who walk therein. "Blessed is the man who trusteth in thee;" for he trusts in the Lord of Hosts; trusteth in the arm of omnipotence; in him who cannot change; in him who is mighty to save—powerful to perform; whose will who can overthrow? Who speaks, and it is done; who commands, and it stands fast. Blessed are they who put their trust in Jesus for time and eternity.

SEPT. 11.—*A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*—PROV. xv. 1.

We daily learn that perfection belongeth not to man in this time-state; yet have we admonitions, instructions, and warnings. The desire of the renewed soul is submission to God's will; the cry of the heart,

"subdue mine iniquities;" the struggle of the soul, between flesh and spirit: and though we believe "there is no condemnation for them who are in Christ Jesus," yet the law of love to Christ constraineth us to loathe the deeds of the flesh, which often make us long to depart and be with Jesus, delivered from that which is a house of bondage to the freed spirit. Look then at the words of the ancient preacher, and say if this, with many more, is not wholesome admonition. It is a truth, "a soft answer turneth away wrath;" turns a full tide of invectives; restrains the violence of an unrenewed opponent, and brings them often to crouch at the feet of him who battles in the strength of the Lord: while "grievous words stir up anger," perhaps end in murder—for man unrestrained by the power of God is a very devil, and renewed man is only kept by the same power. "The tongue is a world of iniquity, and is set on fire of hell." Cannot my soul say with the Psalmist, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O God, my strength and my redeemer?"

SEPT. 12.—*For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*—HEB. xiii. 14.

We have here an overwhelming subject for thy meditation, oh my soul. Dost thou not feel it a truth—yes, and a blessed truth? We are but wanderers in the wilderness, sojourning in a strange land; for "here we have no continuing city;" we know that all of earth shall perish, and we ourselves have only a lifehold in the things of time. The period must come when all of earth will close upon us; then how blessed to have no continuing city, and more so, to be seeking one to come, that is, a heavenly. What can the po-

sessions of earth avail when we are on the verge of Jordan? when the cold hand of death tells us we must leave all. And what can purchase an inheritance in heaven? Nothing; the free grace of God alone can bestow it, and faith realizes the blessing. "The fathers died in faith, seeing the promises afar off, and confessing they were strangers and pilgrims on earth; and they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." We see the promise made to the fathers fulfilled in Jesus, "whose day Abraham saw and was glad." And shall not we rejoice while

Travelling through Immanuel's land
To fairer worlds on high?

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, oh my soul, and hope to the end; privileged to have no abiding city, and most highly privileged to be seeking one to come; a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, "where is laid up a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give in that day"—not to Paul only—"but unto all them also that love his appearing." Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus.

SEPT. 13.—*The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.*—
LUKE iv. 18.

A portion full of the most blessed truths, for thy meditation, oh my soul. Holy Spirit, help me, that I may read to understand, and meditate to profit. But surely these words are so explicit, that "he that runs may read" and understand, but to profit is not so

certain. Here is the accomplishment of a prophecy, and the Lord Jesus himself proclaiming that it was fulfilled in *Him*. We see the sure word of prophecy fulfilled in this Scripture ; and the word of him "who spake as never man spake" attesting the truth of it, and revealing the glorious news of his mission—"peace on earth, and good will towards men." What was the mission of Jesus, thus called ? "For he shall save his people from their sins." "The Spirit of the Lord was upon him, because he had anointed him to preach the gospel to the poor." "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." He was sent to heal the broken-hearted ; "blessed are they which mourn, for they shall be comforted"—"to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind ; to set at liberty them which are bound." This was the message of Jesus on earth ; "He was a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel." He came to fulfil in time, what had been purposed in eternity. He was the promised seed, to bruise the serpent's head. Israel's Messiah, shadowed forth under their law dispensation, and whom Israel rejected, because he came in humility, and not with the pomp and splendour of earthly kings ; for "*his kingdom was not of this world.*" He was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ;" the one only and sufficient sacrifice, speaking peace by the shedding of blood once for all ; the eternal and ever-living high priest, who has now entered into the holiest of holies, so that no more sacrifice for sin is needful ; Jesus, the Mediator, is the new and living way. "This is my beloved son, hear him," was a voice out of the cloud ; and when it was past, Jesus was found alone—*Moses*

and Elias were gone: law and prophecy were complete in Jesus, *now* hear him. Yes, Lord, when the stony heart is softened to receive thee; the spiritually blind eyes unclosed to behold thee; the sin-bitten soul brought to turn to thee; when thou by thy Spirit hast delivered the captive, bound by the chains of sin and Satan, and set at liberty them that are bound—"for whom the Son makes free, are free indeed"—then will the soul hear thee, follow thee, cleave to thee, and, believing in thee, rejoice in thee and praise thee for ever and ever.

Believing, we rejoice,
To see the curse removed;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing redeeming love.

WATTS.

SEPT. 14.—*Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.*—ISAIAH li. 7.

Who can make self-application of these words? To whom is the admonition addressed? Jesus spake to his disciples when he said, "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad when men revile ye;" and these are they who know righteousness, and the people in whose heart is God's law. Ah, why do these people so often fear the reproach of men; 'afraid of their revilings? The flesh is perfect weakness, and only in the strength of the Lord can we overcome. The law in the heart reveals the weakness of the creature; and unless the Lord give power, "we are crushed by a moth;" we tremble before our fellow-man, and fear the reproach of a sinful worm of the earth; but if the Lord uphold, he give power, then are the reproaches of men set

at naught, and their revilings "as chaff before the wind." Blessed is it to know our weakness, but more blessed to know where our strength lieth. Oh what is the creature man, that we should fear him? What the reproaches of the whole earth, if the Lord be on our side? What the revilings (if false) if our heart be right with God? What is the world, if Jesus be ours? What this short life, with eternity before us?

SEPT. 15.—*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

—ROMANS vi. 23.

Here is life and death set before us; wages earned, and gifts bestowed. Wages, for what? For serving the world, the flesh, and the devil—and this is sin. What are the wages of sin? Death. *One sin brought death*, by the disobedience of the first Adam; "and he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all"—so that all stand guilty before God. Life and immortality are brought to light through Jesus Christ the second Adam—the Lord from heaven; and this is the gift of God freely bestowed—not wages earned—not reward merited; but a gift, freely, fully, eternally bestowed upon whomsoever the Father will: and all whom the Father giveth to the Son shall surely come to him, and whosoever cometh, he will in nowise cast out. What, oh my soul, are all the gifts of earthly potentates? What all the favours that man can bestow, compared to that exceeding and eternal weight of glory? "Eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord;" and with him "hath freely given all things." "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Therefore, in possessing Christ we possess all things; and all the gift of God. "Therefore let

no man glory in man." Oh my soul, the heights and depths of the love of God in Christ Jesus surpasseth understanding. It is praise alone that seems to arise in the heart and feelings for this unspeakable gift; which neither the tongue can utter, nor the pen trace. Therefore, in the words of the inspired Psalmist, I would pour out my full heart; "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; healeth all thy diseases; redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." Bless the Lord, oh my soul.

SEPT. 16.—*My kingdom is not of this world.*—

JOHN xviii. 36.

And dost thou profess, oh my soul, to be one with him, by whom these words were spoken? To follow him in the regeneration? To have part and lot in the great salvation? To have been renewed by the Spirit's power? To have been brought out of darkness into marvellous light, and the eyes of thine understanding opened to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the exceeding riches of grace treasured up in Christ Jesus the Lord? If the great realities of redemption are thine; if Christ has fulfilled the law for thee, died for thee, risen for thee, and ever liveth to make intercession for thee; if his precious blood has cleansed thee from all sin, so that thou standest before God without spot, covered with his glorious garments of salvation; if he is gone to prepare a place for thee, and will come again to receive thee to himself, that where he is, there thou mayest be also; oh, if thou canst realize these great and glorious privileges, that

thou art one of his sheep, to whom he has given eternal life, so that they shall never perish, nor shall any pluck them out of his hand, and for whom there are joys unspeakable and full of glory, and pleasures for evermore at his right hand: oh, I say, what are all the kingdoms of this world? the pomp, the vanities, the riches, the splendour, the pleasures of this time-state—yea, its ease and comfort, compared with that heavenly inheritance, that everlasting kingdom treasured up in Christ. How vain does all of earth appear, when the soul is drawn out to look beyond it; when we truly see vanity stamped on all below; *feel* that the place which knoweth us now shall know us no more; that each day brings us nearer our eternal home, and the clouds of the valley shall soon cover us. When realizing these precious truths, we ride on our high places, leaving the things which are behind, and pressing forward to the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus. Blessed, blessed, Jesus! thou hast procured all these blessings of thy glorious kingdom for thy redeemed; and glory, glory, be unto thee. Amen. Hallelujah!

SEPT. 17.—*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*—2 COR. xiii. 5.

There are many points to be considered in this Scripture. The apostle exhorts the Corinthian disciples to *examine* themselves, whether they be *in the faith*—to *prove* their own selves; and then he questions, “Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” And have not the disciples of Jesus the same need of exhorta-

tion, the same cause for questioning, in this day of self-delusion and empty profession? Attend, then, oh my soul, to that which is written by inspiration of God; and may the same Spirit guide thy meditation. Examine thyself; what is the ground of thy hope? What is the hope of thy calling? 1st. Thine eyes have been opened to *see*, thy heart has been broken to *feel* thyself a sinner. 2nd. Peace has been applied to thy conscience, through the all-sufficiency of the atoning blood of Jesus; and all thy hope is centred in Him. "Whether ye be in the faith." The faith once delivered to the saints" is simply this—"believe in thine heart in the Lord Jesus Christ." Lord, thou knowest, as I stand bare before thee, I have no other hope or refuge. I believe in the heart that by thee only can I attain unto everlasting life. Neither works of righteousness, nor deeds of merit, have I to offer unto thee; but a broken and contrite heart, trusting wholly to thee for life and immortality. "Prove your own selves." Thy word, O Lord, confirms me in the belief that thy Spirit has led me to the truth—yea, led me to the fountain of living waters, which "springeth up into everlasting life." Yes, prove your own selves, for ye shall not be approved of men. "Judge your own selves, that ye be not judged of the Lord." "Know ye not your own selves" (saith the apostle) "how that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" Oh my soul, what a knowledge! and what a fearful exception! "*Know ye not?*" And is it presumption (as some say) to *know* your calling of God? To know that Christ is formed in you the hope of glory? And if thou *hast not this knowledge*, my soul, how canst thou

escape from believing thyself a reprobate—examining thyself by the apostle's words? Gracious Lord, faith is thy gift; and if thou give this knowledge, no mortal can wrest it from those on whom thou bestowest this great privilege. But many are weak in faith, and know not themselves. For *this* we bless thee, O Lord, that salvation rests not on faith; and the weak child is as certain of acceptance as the strong, but has not the comfort. We bless thee for the "unspeakable gift" of knowing our election of God, without which under toils and soul-trouble we should sink in despair. All thy ways are wisdom, O Lord: all thy work complete; all thy word is truth; and all shall end in thine own glory, to thine eternal praise.

SEPT. 18.—*Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.—ISAIAH l. 10.*

What a precious portion for those who are "exercised thereby!" Those only who have seen the light can be conscious of darkness; they that are born blind know not what light is—they cannot comprehend it: and so incomprehensible is spiritual light to the spiritually blind, that many say, "We see," and yet are blind—and these are not conscious of, nor do they know what darkness is. But there are some who can say, "This I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." It may be for a time they bask in the light of the Lord's countenance, rejoicing in Christ Jesus; their mountain stands strong, they think they shall never be moved; the soul seems absorbed in the love of Jesus, "peace flowing

ke a river," things of earth move them not, they
 e made their nest on high, and fancy they can never
 el upon earthly things again : all appears light,
 life, and love ; fain would they flee away to be for
 with their Lord. But the " Lord's ways are not
 ways ;" there are lessons to be learned in the
 ol of Christ, of which the new-born babe is little
 re. It pleases the Lord to give different lessons
 is children, according to his sovereign will and
 pose. It is to his people the Lord speaketh in the
 pture upon which we are meditating—" Ye that
 the Lord, obey the voice of his servant, that walk
 arkness, and have no light." To this position a
 d of God may be brought—the light withdrawn—
 horror of great darkness" is felt—the word is no
 ger feasted upon—

Prayer a task and burden prove ;
 ve waxes cold," frames and feelings are gone. Oh
 the soul in such a state to have these words applied
 a power—" Let him trust in the name of the Lord,
 stay upon his God"—*his* God. Yes, to realize
 trust, this stay, in times of darkness, is a blessed
 l for faith. To see God still *thy* God, my soul ; to
 w that he changeth not ; that what he hath done
 one for ever ; that he is immutable ; that Jesus is
 hful, his work perfected, finished, complete ; that
 changes are in thyself—this is the blessedness of
 h—a privilege to be thankful for—self-glorying—
 -derived comforts are ended. Faith looks alone
 esus, trusts in the name of the Lord, and stays
 n the God of our salvation.

SEPT. 19.—*Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I trust.*

PSALM xvi. 1.

Here is a sweet petition of the Psalmist to follow our last meditation. He asks not preservation from any particular trial; but “preserve me, O God.” This implies preservation from all that would offend the Lord his God, or disgrace his high calling. Preserve me, O God, for thou alone art able; preserve me from my enemies; preserve me from myself, for in thee do I put my trust. There was nothing doubtful in the mind of David as to where he placed his hope; in whom he trusted; to whom he looked for preservation. And is it not the daily cry of the believer—the heart-cry, if utterance be not given—“preserve me, O God; and in whom can I trust but thee?” But we look (again) from David up to David’s Lord, and then see the blessed connection between Christ and his members. The Psalms testified of Jesus, they spoke of him in types; and the apostle Peter explains of whom the Psalmist spake (Acts ii. 25—28). The Lord, in the days of his flesh, uttered cries to his Father; and his people cry unto him. Thus are we continually led from the shadows to the substance; from the law to the Law-fulfiller; from the prophets to him of whom they prophesied; seeing at every step that the Scriptures are truly “they which testify of Jesus,” who is in truth the Alpha and Omega; for whom all things are and were created; for whose sake all things are preserved; and by whom all things are upheld. Jesus is the centre point, the resting-place, the consummation of all things; his death, our life; his resurrection, our glory; his finished work of love and mercy, our eternal joy, and shall be to his everlasting praise!

SEPT. 20.—*Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.*—2 TIM. ii. 19.

Nevertheless—yes, whatever men may profess, or whatever man may say of his fellow-men, naught can shake the foundation of God, which is sealed by his eternal purpose, and confirmed by his word. The knowledge of our God is infinite; past, present, and future are all one with him. Amidst all our misgivings, contradictions, or doubts of ourselves or others, “the Lord knoweth them that are his.” This is his seal which cannot be broken, neither can there be change with the Almighty. He knows them that are his, and will keep them to the end; they shall be called in time, and preserved for eternal glory; they are kept by the faith of Jesus, and can never periah. Lord, thou knowest all things, and the glory of thy people is to give thee all the praise; and let all who profess to follow thee, depart from iniquity. Ye cannot serve God and mammon; Christ and Belial: ye cannot serve two masters. Oh my soul, art thou on the Lord’s side? Does the love of Christ constrain thee, or the fear of man enslave thee? Does Christ dwell in thy heart by faith, or does the love of the world rule thee? Dost thou prize the unsearchable riches of Christ more than the gold of Ophir, or anything this world can give? Lord, it is thou alone that canst search the heart; thou knowest *all* that are thine; and as thou givest grace, so surely shalt thou bring them to glory: not for anything *in* them, but because they are *in* the true Vine, and thou “workest in them to will and to do of thy good pleasure.” For all that thou hast done *in* them and for them, the *praise be all thine, for ever and ever.*

SEPT. 21.—*A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.*

—PROV. xv. 13.

Those who know what it is to have had a broken and contrite heart under the power of *felt sin*, and the blood of Christ sprinkled upon the conscience by the application of the Spirit, speaking peace, can spiritually apply these words of the wise man. What sorrow of heart can break the spirit, equal to a sense of sin wrought by the Holy Spirit? There is a *natural* sense of sin—a stricken conscience without the quickening of the Spirit of Holiness; there are convictions, which is not conversion; a reception of evangelical truths, which is not the new birth; a sorrow of heart by which the spirit is not broken; a cheerful countenance, which does not arise from “the love of God shed abroad in the heart;” a merry heart, which is nature’s gift, and not the Spirit’s power. Convictions of the natural conscience “pass away as the morning dew;” but the quickening of the Spirit abideth, deepening and working—“for he that begins the good work shall carry it on.” This is sorrow not to be repented of, the broken heart which Jesus came to heal, the wound he came to bind up, the sinner he came to call to repentance; this is the heart’s sorrow, which none know but those who feel; the sorrow which bringeth joy; the sorrow for which we bless God, and by which we are brought to glory only in Christ; a sorrow which can never be turned into joy, until the joyful news of liberty to the captive is proclaimed. When this is sounded, when peace by the blood of the Lamb is realized—applied by the Spirit—then, oh then comes the merry heart, this maketh a cheerful countenance, and “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;” so that

We tell to sinners round,
What a dear Saviour we have found.

This is the "oil which makes the face to shine, and the wine which maketh the heart glad." This causes the sinner to turn from his evil ways, "rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh."

SEPT. 22.—*Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord our God, even thou only.*—2 KINGS xix. 19.

The importunity of a soul coming before God in the power of his Spirit is most particularly exemplified in this concluding petition of Hezekiah's; and another prominent feature is, *why* he petitions the Lord to save his Israel out of the hand of the enemy. How little do we know the reality of prayer! A form of words is not prayer; the mere utterance of words is not prayer; the desire of the flesh is not the prayer of the Spirit; a periodical duty offering is not always prayer. There are times of special prayer, such as Hezekiah's, when the soul is overwhelmed, and the Spirit breathes the distresses of the heart into the ear (if we may so speak) of the Lord, with struggles and importunity, known only to those who have experienced it. Prayer is not always answered immediately; God is a sovereign in all his ways: but the prayer which he puts into the heart shall assuredly be granted; but he has his appointed time for the accomplishment of every event. Hezekiah's emergency was great, and if deliverance were to be effected, it must be at once; "I beseech thee to save us out of his hand, not only that we may be saved from captivity, but we are thy people, and thou art the only true God."

Show thyself, O Lord, and prove to all the kingdoms of the earth that thou art the Lord thou only.' The God of the nations could but thou, O Lord, for *thine own sake*, save us soul, how blessed to trace the wonderful : God ; faith is strengthened when we see and hear of "his doings among the children Oh when the soul is brought to say, "for sake, Lord," then self is out of sight. Where of God is the pre-eminent desire of the heart the eye is single, and the exaltation of our Master the exclusive object,—these are "refreshing from the Lord ;" the soul then sets the gods of the nations, and the kingdoms are beneath the feet. The Lord gives speech at special times, when he comes forth with show that he is God, and will be glorified in To thee, Almighty Jehovah, besides whom is no other God, be all glory and praise : revealed thyself by thy Spirit in Christ Lord.

SEPT. 23.—*Blessed be the Lord my strength
teacheth my hands to war, and my finger
my goodness, and my fortress ; my high
my deliverer ; my shield, and he in whom*
PSALM cxliv. 1, 2.

The Lord my strength ! Oh for the soul power of these words ; to have the heart of its own perfect weakness, insufficiency, tuition ! The mere knowledge of gospel neither comfort, satisfy, nor profit the heart but the experience in the heart, under the of the Holy Spirit, is carried out in act, &

in perfect reliance upon God, is enabled to say, "Blessed be the Lord my strength, who teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight." "When I am weak then am I strong," is *felt* and *understood* when the Lord teacheth. "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me," is realized when the Almighty Teacher puts forth his power; and "blessed be the Lord" is felt in the inmost soul, comforting and rejoicing the heart. But vain is the attempt to make another feel as we feel; the application must be "by the same Spirit;" his sovereign power must give strength, or we fight and war in our own, and never overcome. Oh how blessed when we truly feel our own perfect weakness, and thrice blessed to *know* the Lord is our strength. And what a rich cluster follows! Dost thou, my soul, realize in thy heart these words of the inspired Psalmist. Is the Lord thy goodness? Lord Jesus, thou art made of God the righteousness of thy people. Is he thy fortress, thy high tower, thy deliverer? Lord, thou art all and everything; a fortress impregnable, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail; a high power that reacheth unto heaven, which no works of merit, nor deeds of duty, nor flesh-offerings, nor self-righteousness, can ever surmount. A deliverer—an everlasting deliverer, from sin and its consequences. Thou hast delivered from the sting and the power of death; for thou art "the resurrection and the life" of all thy chosen seed; thou hast delivered from Satan those who were captives in his kingdom, and slaves—willing, though blinded, slaves to his arbitrary power. Thou hast delivered from the curse of sin, the demands of justice, and the condemnation of God, all whom the Father gave thee, and for

whom thou hast died; so that thou art the shield of thy people, and he in whom they trust: a shield from God's justice and from Satan's rage. The Father looketh upon thee, and is well pleased; Satan looks, and is confounded; thy people look upon thee, and are healed; they touch thy garment—yea, if but the hem—and virtue flows from thee sufficient to "heal all their diseases." It is thou that subduest thy people under thee. Precious Lord Jesus, when strong in thy strength, we glory in our weakness. Blessed, oh how blessed, to "taste and see that the Lord is gracious;" "to have heard, to have seen, to have looked upon, to have handled of the word of life" in spirit, though not as the beloved disciple, in the flesh. To believe in the heart in the Lord Jesus Christ, by the Spirit's power, is that faith which man can neither give nor take away. Blessed be the Lord my strength, and blessed be his holy name for ever and ever.

SEPT. 24.—*But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you and keep you from evil.*—2 THESS. iii. 3.

Glorious consideration! the Lord is faithful. Whatever man may be, the Lord changeth not. Doth thy faith give way, my soul! then rest not upon it, but the faithfulness of thy Lord. It is not thy faith which saves thee, but it gives thee the comfort in believing: thy faith may droop, it may fail, but this alters not the state of those who are in Jesus, "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." It is the faithfulness of thy God, by which the redeemed are sanctified by faith which is in him, as the apostle declares in Acts xxvi. 18. "The Lord changeth not"—this is our mercy; his faithfulness,

his love, are eternal: and not only faithful, but the apostle adds, "who shall stablish you, and keep you from all evil." The province of our faith is to realize the promises, and to receive individual comfort thereby. It is blessed to believe the word of the Lord; this is a trial of faith which is most precious; to believe in the heart that the Lord ever abideth faithful, that he will strengthen, support, direct, and guide in all thy trials, and keep thee from all evil; this is a blessed exercise of faith. Do not expect to escape trials and tribulations; these are not evils; but nothing evil can come upon the Lord's people, for he works all together for good to those who love him, who are loved by him. "He keeps them as the apple of his eye;" he nourisheth and cherisheth his Church, and will finally present it to himself without spot or blemish. Pure in thy purity, thou spotless Lamb of God; dependent on thy faithfulness, which can never fail, let the heart of them rejoice who love the Lord.

SEPT. 25.—*When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?*—JOHN vi. 61.

There are disciples of Jesus in all ages who murmur at what they cannot comprehend. "Doth this offend you?" What will ye then say if ye see greater things? Here we may see the blessedness of that faith upon which we last meditated. Our Lord said to Thomas, "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." If all who call themselves Christians were permitted to expunge from the word of God what offended them, what portion would remain? Alas, the Holy Scriptures would be a mere shell. But, no, in the face of all opposition, murmurings,

objections, offence, and blasphemy, the word of God has been preserved un mutilated, though many expunge and pervert to their own destruction. My soul, turn to the precious truth which offended these disciples of thy Lord—eating his flesh and drinking his blood! Enter not into the secrets of the deluded, but hear what the Lord saith: “It is the Spirit which quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing;” “he that believeth on me hath everlasting life;” “I am that bread of life;” “all that the Father giveth me shall come to me;” “and it is the Father’s will, that of all he hath given I should lose nothing;” “he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” “Doth this offend you?” Yea, and much more of these precious, precious truths. Here is another saying of “him who spake as never man spake,” which offendeth many: “No man can come to me except the Father draw him.” Neither can any believe to the saving of the soul, unless the Spirit quicken. Spiritually to eat thy flesh and drink thy blood, thou Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, is feeding and feasting on thee by faith. “The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin,” and upon whomsoever he will he sprinkleth it. His flesh he gave for the life of the world; it is the heavenly manna; the tree of life, of which if any eat they shall live for ever. The Jews and the disciples, with their carnal understanding, are offended; “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Lord Jesus, I believe the literal bread and wine to be emblems of thy great atoning sacrifice, by which thou gavest thy

body and sheddest thy blood, to be taken by thy true disciples in remembrance of thee, to show forth thy death till thou come. It is a manifestation of our faith, a bond of union among believers; but unless we feed on him in the heart by faith, we have no spiritual life. "Lord, ever more give us this bread."

SEPT. 26.—*But ye have not so learned Christ.*—

EPH. iv. 20.

Ask thy soul again and again, "How hast thou learned Christ?" Surely, my soul replies, "the Spirit hath taken of the things of Jesus, and shown them unto thee." Has not thy blindness and darkness been shown to thee; thy sinfulness by nature; thy past sins, and thy remaining corruptions; that "all which is not of faith is sin," and that all holiness is in Jesus? If thou have heard his voice speaking peace to thy burdened conscience; "have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus," then "old things are passed away, and all things are become new." The law of love constraineth thee to put off the conversation of the old man, being renewed in the spirit of your mind; "having put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." "That which is born of God sinneth not." Flesh is flesh, and must see corruption; but the spiritual birth is not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever (1 Peter i. 23—25). And thus the flesh lusteth against the Spirit—and hence comes the warfare; and "blessed be the Lord my God, who teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight," is a blessed learning of Christ. Felt weakness goes to the strong for strength; and the sensible sinner has no peace out

of Christ. Truly to learn Christ, must be the teaching of the Holy Spirit; and until the heart is broken, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin experienced, Christ may be known after the flesh, but he is not known after the Spirit. To put off the deeds of darkness and the works of self-righteousness, and to cast thyself destitute, poor and miserable, on Christ by faith as thy all, thy hope, thy refuge, thy deliverer, and "thy exceeding great reward," is a blessed learning of Christ. "To grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord," is to learn Christ, to the emptying of self and the exaltation of Jesus. To learn Christ in the beauty of holiness, self must be loathed and humbled, and Jesus seen and felt to be the "chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely."

SEPT. 27.—*And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, amen, with lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.*—NEHEMIAH viii. 6.

When my soul is led to contemplate the "law given by Moses," it invariably reverts to the "grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ." When I view the Old Testament saints with the yoke of the law, "which was added because of transgression," I am led to Him whose "yoke is easy and burden light." When I meditate on the glory which was revealed to them of old, it must be in connection with that glory which surpasseth. The outward manifestations of the Israel of God under the law oftentimes arrest my attention; the simultaneous rise, the blessings, the praises, the shouted "hosannahs," all seem to fill my soul with a holy awe. I see the God of Israel, the God

that ruleth and reigneth now ; the One only God Jehovah, the Creator of all things, and the Redeemer of his chosen people. My spirit appears to join with Ezra in blessing the Lord ; and the Amen, amen, with lifting up of hands, sound, as it were, in my ear, and come before the eye of the mind, with a vivid portrayal of ancient Israel standing before Ezra the priest and scribe, elevated on his pulpit of wood, "with the book of the law of Moses which the Lord commanded to Israel." I behold the one mind, the holy reverence for their law ; the book is opened, they all stand up ; Ezra blesses the Lord, they all respond ; and then with reverence and godly fear they bow their heads and worship the Lord, with their faces to the ground. Yes, there is much that is glorious in the "law delivered to Moses ;" and these ancient people I cannot reflect on but with great interest. Methinks I now see them in their loose girdled robes, with flowing beards, surrounding their sacred manuscript with eyes and ears full of expectation ; the women, and the children who could understand, bringing up the rear—"they gathered themselves together as one man." Oh my soul, thou dost yearn over thy Christian brethren ; and sigh and long for this manifested oneness. But I look again at the law, and see it a dead letter ; I look at ancient Israel, and see the form without the power ; the letter, and not the spirit ; the outward humiliation and will-worship ; but not the contrite spirit and the broken heart ; the outward work of the law, but not the inward mark of grace. In short, my soul, thou seest Moses in the law, and not Christ ; but thou feelest Christ in thy heart, and not Moses ; thou seest the bondage of the law, but feelest the freedom of the gospel. Yes, yes, my soul doth

bless and praise thy holy name, thou God of Israel. I see the Saviour thereof hidden under types and shadows in the law of Moses, who is made manifest, in these latter days, in Jesus the author and finisher of all; made manifest unto my soul as the "only name whereby I can be saved," feel the oneness of all the brethren *in* Christ, but see the manifold divisions of thy kindred after the spirit. Well, Lord, so be it; all things shall work together for good according to thy precious word. Thou art the head of thy body the Church; and all thy Israel shall be saved in thee with an everlasting salvation. The glory of the law is completed in Jesus; its glory is departed, because its end is fulfilled; and thou hast brought in a glory which excelleth sevenfold, which is as the light of the sun to that of the moon, which shines only by the reflection of the greater light; for "if the ministration of death was glorious, how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? for if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious" (2 Cor. iii. 7—11). Thou glorious Shepherd of thy scattered sheep, help us to live more to thy glory, and to glory less in the creature—to glory only in *Thee*; and while with the ancient seed of Abraham, we bless the glorious name of Jehovah, we, the seed of Abraham by faith, do bless thee in Christ Jesus for thy glorious act of grace, whereby there is neither Jew nor Gentile, for all thy seed are one in Him. Amen, amen.

SEPT. 28.—*For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.*—PHIL. i. 29.

What a glorious privilege it is to believe in Christ

the saving of the soul ; to have peace and joy in living ; to know our calling of God in Christ ; to have him " formed in us the hope of glory ; " to rest in his love ; to have " quietness and assurance for ever." And is peace, and joy, and hope, and love, and ease, and comfort, and quietness of conscience, the privileges the believer has ? Ah, all this is very blessed ; but still, my soul, there is a something of a diverse kind to be esteemed a privilege by thee by all disciples of the Lord to the end of time. The apostle says, " Unto you it is given not only to believe in Christ, but to suffer for his sake." Oh to be able, sensibly feel, that it is a high privilege to suffer for Christ's sake ! It is easy to rejoice in comfort ; but to rejoice in trial, to glory in suffering, this is opposed to flesh and nature : but the apostle says, " I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." And truly, if thou strengthen, the weakest of thy disciples shall become strong, and glory in being permitted to suffer for thy sake. But in the flesh we shrink from trial ; and even in the behalf of him who hath done so much for us, how cowardly we are, unless upheld by thyself, O Lord. What fear of man, what pride of heart, what love of the creature, fear of reproach, love of ease, desires of the flesh, and all the concomitants of self-love, intervene, to prevent our glorying in suffering for thy sake. But, Lord, thy word saith, " As thy day thy strength shall be." Thy disciples in the day of battle, of whatever kind, upheld by " thine everlasting arm beneath," shall do thy will, shall glory in thy cross, and *their* cross, and hold it but one privilege, high and holy, to believe in thee, and to suffer for thy sake. Lift up thine heart, and shout, *Amen, amen.*

SEPT. 29.—*For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*—LUKE xix. 10.

It is as if every text opened something new to the mind, yet all revolving to one common centre. It is not the desire of my soul to meditate for the gratification of idle curiosity, vain speculation, or unprofitable surmises; but for the establishment of faith, the comfort of the soul, and the exaltation of the Saviour of sinners. Much might be said from these few words on the distinction between Jew and Gentile. Zachæus was a Gentile, and yet the Lord called him a son of Abraham: the 3rd chapter of Galatians, 7th verse, will explain this—"They which are of faith are children of Abraham:" and if we take the strict import of the words, we must believe the Lord spake exclusively of the Gentiles. "He came to his own (kindred after the flesh, the Jews), and his own received him not." Jesus did not seek them; he was born among his brethren in national relationship—the Church collectively was saved from the foundation of the world. Then we may assuredly look at the Gentile nations whom Jesus came to seek and to save: there was no longer to be a middle wall of partition, "but in himself he made of twain one new man:" so there is no longer Jew or Gentile in the Church of Christ, but all are one in him. Israel had been a separated people; the One only Jehovah was their God, who had revealed himself unto them, as he had not to any other nation. The rest of the nations were heathens; they were lost as to the knowledge of the true God, notwithstanding they were in the eternal covenant, and partakers of the promise given to Abraham. Yes, Jesus came to seek his sheep out of all nations, kindred, and tongues; "to seek and to

ave that which was lost." The Lord alone knoweth hem that are his; but not one shall be left. They ll go astray and never return to the "Shepherd and bishop of their souls," until he himself searcheth and seeketh them out. His Spirit bloweth upon them, and they live; new life cometh into them, and they band up a numerous army. O Lord, it is all thine own Almighty power, by which thou drawest the rebellious unto thee; and as Son of Man, thou camest to seek that which was lost among the ruins of this world, led captive by Satan in chains of adamant, which thou alone couldst burst asunder. Who can stand the power of thine omnipotent arm? "Thou makest willing in the day of thy power;" and not one for whom thou hast shed thy precious blood can be lost. O Lord, not one of Adam's race would seek thee, didst not thou first seek them. Thy mercy is great in saving any; thy justice dared not spare the guilty. Hosannah then to the Son of Man, for worthy one is the Lamb that was slain.

EPT. 30.—*And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.*—LUKE x. 28.

The great apostle of the Gentiles saith, "The commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." Thus it is when the spirit of a new life is given, the holy law of God brings nothing but condemnation to the convinced sinner. The law saith, "What shall I do?" and those who are under the bondage of the law strive to establish their own righteousness. Jesus saith unto the lawyer, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." Thou understandest the letter, perform the requirements of the law, and thou shalt live eternally by it. But what

saith the Scripture? "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." What saith the law? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, thy soul, thy strength, thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself." Oh what a poor, deluded, self-deceiving creature man is! The lawyer willing to justify himself, asks, Who is my neighbour? The Lord points out "mercy" to him; but the law's demand is "justice." And God's requirements are without reservation; the law of the Lord must be kept entire, not one jot to fail, or it must be wholly abandoned for justification. The law is "justice," the gospel "mercy;" *that* equity, *this* love. Oh my soul, canst thou pretend to keep *any* of God's holy commands in the spirit of the gospel? Canst thou ever be in thyself pure in God's sight? Not one of Adam's fallen race can ever attain unto perfection; and only such can stand before the Lord of lords. "He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all." Oh the mighty mystery of redemption! Sinners brought nigh to God, not in themselves sinless; justified in his sight, without paying the demands of justice; free from eternal condemnation, though not free from sin. Great indeed is the mystery of godliness, "God manifest in the flesh." Here is the sum and substance; here is the end of the law; here is the glory of the gospel; here is justice satisfied, and mercy displayed; Jesus sacrificed, and the sinner freed! My soul, under what law art thou? Is it not the law of love to Jesus thy Redeemer? Oh, yes, though cold in feeling, yet the law of love is in the heart; the hatred to sin in the conscience: the law no longer condemns, for the riches of mercy have made us who believe accepted in the Beloved, and before the Father we stand in Christ Jesus complete.

'his is the sinner's glory, the saint's perfection ; to esus be all the praise, who hath washed us in his lood. Glory, glory, to the Lamb !

OCTOBER.

CT. 1.—*And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty ; for it was perfect through my comeliness, saith the Lord.*—EZEK. xvi. 14.

The Scriptures are full of similitudes, figures, and rables. We, therefore, feel justified in carrying the nilitude from the old dispensation to the new, rich cannot invalidate the original import, but rather ablish the beautiful harmony which unites the Old d New Testaments. We are very fearful of the tremes to which Christians run in this day of cited fancy and vain speculation. Some so spirialize Scripture that the literal transactions are kept t of sight, thereby bringing this holy word of God on the threshold of a mere allegory. Others, ring the contrary extreme, adhere so exclusively to a letter that a spiritual interpretation is denied. uly may we say in every sense, "Lord, what is n ?" Vain man would be wise, though he be born e a wild ass's colt. The chapter from which the bject for our meditation is taken explains itself. rusalem, the ancient city where Jehovah estabhed the worship of himself by his called people, set forth in similitude, and the chapter teems th instruction, viewed with a spiritual eye. The vereignty of God in selecting and calling a people ; inging them to the land of promise ; establishing city "*to be the praise of the whole earth,*" where

alone he was to be worshipped ; its splendour, riches, and glory ; the favour of the Lord Jehovah, and the awful abominations of this favoured people, are figuratively and clearly brought to view. And where is Jerusalem ? where the ancient people now ? The word asserts all their beauty was of the Lord ; but Israel was under a covenant of works, and the wilfulness, the sinfulness, and the incapability of man to perform God's holy laws, are vividly portrayed in the history of Israel. The Jewish visible Church is no more. Their laws and statutes, their priesthood and sacrifices, their temple and holy things, where are they ? Yes, where are they ? My soul replies, under the covenant of eternal love, with a heart full of the covenant of grace, with the eye of faith towards the new Jerusalem, and the hand of faith upon the head of Jesus, Here, here, is all thy treasure, O thou city of God ; here, O Israel, is thy Priest and Sacrifice ; here thy altar and all thy holy things ; here thy laws and the end of them—here, in his body, the temple where he dwelleth, whose beauty is perfect through *his* comeliness, which he hath put upon it. And this, O my soul, can never be forfeited. The spiritual Israel have been from eternity the invisible Church, known only to the Lord. The covenant of grace, the law of love, the work of faith, have been from the beginning. Grace has pardoned the sinner ; love has thrown its robe of righteousness over all, and they stand just before God. Faith realizes and enjoys the wonders of redeeming love, and the whole Church triumphant, when the last elect vessel is called, shall join in one universal song of praise to Him in whose “ comeliness ” they stand before Jehovah's throne.

2.—*Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of wells of salvation.*—ISAIAH xii. 3.

his text comes very blessedly after our last meditation, concluding with the blessings of the covenant of grace. *Therefore, with joy, "rejoice in Christ."* "Rejoice alway, and again I say, rejoice," is the exhortation of the apostle; rejoicing, also, in salvation. But why, my soul, art thou not always rejoicing? Because thou art not always drawing water from the wells of salvation. Ye go to broken cisterns to dry wells, to thine own empty pitcher, to the help of flesh, to creature helps. There is nothing but sorrow in these—all broken reeds, which pierce thee through. But when the soul is drawn to the God of salvation; when the Lord Jehovah is *felt* to be thy strength and thy song, then it is with joy we draw from this precious "well of living water, which giveth up into everlasting life." What a mercy that the covenant of grace cannot be broken, the spiritual Israel cannot be cut off, nor the spiritual temple decayed. Jesus is the keeper of his sheep; he ever liveth, and is a well springing up unto eternal life in the souls of all who are saved, though they may not always draw with joy from this blessed fountain. It is thy Father's mercy, O Lord, that thou canst not change: salvation rests not on the obedience of the creature, but on thy everlasting love. This is a free gift, unmerited, unsought, "in that, while we yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly." And since Christ has so loved the Church, let the Church see and reverence her Lord.

OCT. 3.—*Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.*—ISAIAH. xlv. 15.

Cannot my soul, cannot believers in Jesus, enter experimentally into these words? Does not the Lord oftentimes hide himself, as it were, from his Israel; darkness coming over the soul, the Lord not seen with the spiritual eye of faith—no love, no prayer, no joy, no manifestation of the Lord's presence? Then the soul cleaves to earth; delights more in carnal than in spiritual exercises, and seems to return to the flesh-pots of Egypt; yet "a still small voice within" whispers, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul!" The spirit warreth against the flesh, and sighs for the days that are past. "The Lord hideth himself," but he is still the Saviour of Israel. The soul mourneth, yet still is stayed upon her God. Sense is gone; yet faith remains, which saith, "Though thou art a God which hidest thyself, thou art still behind the cloud, and wilt show thyself again." O precious faith, when sight is gone! and O glorious time, when faith shall be lost in sight, and love be all; when the Lord shall no more hide himself, but shall be seen even as he sees, shall be known even as he knows; when these vile bodies, disencumbered of corruption, shall arise in thy likeness, and be with thee for ever. O my soul! if thy Lord hide himself, it is for thy good. If faith can pierce the cloud, and see him still the same, highly privileged art thou. Stand still, my soul, and see the salvation of the Lord in ways thou canst not fathom; but all shall end in his glory and thy good. Praise the Lord, O my soul!

OCT. 4.—*But he turned and rebuked them, and said,
Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.—*
LUKE ix. 55.

This is one among the many sweet portions of Scripture which exemplify the distinction between the "grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ," and the "law by Moses." "An eye for an eye," saith the law; and when the law comes in judgment, he is a consuming fire. But where "mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other," the rebukes are love-tokens; and we should think, when the Lord "turns" and looks upon his chosen with the rebuke of love, they must inwardly feel, "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be excellent oil that shall not break my head." Oh! how little does man know "what manner of spirit he is of." How little mercy does he show who has received such mercy from the Lord! How little pity or forbearance towards a fellow-sinner do they manifest who must have been consumed, had the wrath of God been poured upon them! Such is man, frail man, even in his renewed state. He must be tried to prove "what manner of spirit he is of." He views his fellow-man with other eyes than those with which he views himself. It is here that Deity shines forth in Jesus—a perfectness in word and deed which man *only* can never attain unto. The rebukes of Jesus are full of love. His chastenings are most sweet and salutary, though they be bitter to the taste and repulsive to the flesh. We know not "what manner of spirit we are of," but the Lord knoweth; and knoweth, too, "our frame, and remembereth we are but dust." The Son of Man did not come with the fiery law to destroy men's

lives, but with the message of peace to seek and to save that which was lost. Blessed Lord, how compassionate, how forbearing, how meek and lowly, was thy sojourn upon earth!—receiving sinners, forgiving the guilty, healing all manner of diseases, and throwing thy crumbs of mercy for Gentile sinners to pick up in faith; showing the God in act, the man in suffering—the God of love to man, the “man of sorrows” in thyself. What man can dare pretend to equal thee? Ah! ye sinful sons of Adam, “ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.” Jesus is the only perfect man that ever trod this earth, because in him the fulness of the Godhead dwelt. Man must lay down his sinful body, that it may see corruption—return to the dust from whence he came, before he shall be raised in incorruption and re-united to the never-dying spirit (which is not the “spirit of man,” but the Spirit of God), and shall be for ever with the Lord.

OCT. 5.—*But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*—2 PET. iii. 8.

“Who, by searching, can find out God? who find out the Almighty to perfection?” Can the limited mind of man fathom the unlimited mind of God? Can a finite creature comprehend infinity? Can a vessel of clay understand its Maker? The mind is lost in the contemplation. The wonders of the universe, as far as man can view them, proclaim a Creator; but it is in the “Book of Revelation” alone that God is clearly known. But fully to know him is not for flesh and blood. Neither beginning nor end, nor time nor seasons; “with whom is no variableness,

neither shadow of turning." One day as a thousand years ! and eternity as one day ! O my soul ! the "High and Holy One, who inhabiteth eternity," is to thee incomprehensible. Bless him, bless him, for what he hath revealed to thee, and trust him for all thou canst not comprehend. Of the essential Deity, thou canst form no estimate. His works are wonderful. The frame of man is wonderful ; his faculties, limited as they are, are wonderful, all proclaiming a wonderful God ; all testifying that Almighty power alone could produce such wonders. But "his ways are past finding out." "So far can man go, and no farther." His mind, his faculties, senses, powers, are all limited, and confined to a mere speck. Yet he "speaketh great swelling words of vanity," and thinks his own arm and own powers procure the great things he possesses, and that his mind will progress into the secrets of the Almighty. But my soul can only see the unbounded God with any measure of comprehensiveness, as clothed in flesh, and uniting Deity with man. Here the Godhead is revealed, and meets the finite mind of the created. Here the soul rests in peace, and faith seeks to know no more than the Holy Spirit is pleased to reveal.

The heights and depths, lengths and breadths of the love of God by Christ Jesus, are past understanding ; but we know that nothing can separate from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

OCT. 6.—*For the Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory ; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*—PSALM lxxxiv. 11.

Although a plurality of Persons in one God, in its

nature and essence, is incomprehensible to the limited faculties of a created being; yet to deny it is to deny altogether the Inspired Volume, from whence the Christian draws the only hope of everlasting life. If we believe the words of Jesus, we must believe that he and the Father are one; so that we behold the Lord of life and glory from everlasting David's Lord, though David's offspring. We see Jesus in the Old Testament, but clearly revealed in the New; and in this latter day we walk in light, where the fathers of the old dispensation walked in darkness. My soul is led to see the union of the Divine Persons in this Scripture, "The Lord God is a sun and shield." Were there no sun, we should not need a shield. Without a shield, we cannot gaze at the sun. The essential Deity no man can see or approach unto; but with Jesus, the Shield, we can approach and live. The Lord God is both sun and shield. Here is the Godhead veiled in the manhood through which "we come boldly to the throne of grace." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; but with the Shield, "we obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." With the Shield, the Lord Jehovah is no more a consuming fire. He has given Jesus power to give life as the Son of God, and authority to execute judgment as the Son of man (John v. 25—27). From and by the Sun and Shield we are led to grace and glory. The thoughts that crowd the mind are too vast, too comprehensive for a simple meditation. What wonders does grace embrace! and what interminable scenes does glory represent to the soul! "Yet hath not eye seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived what God hath prepared for them that love him." The third person in the Triune

Jehovah is necessarily connected with grace. He is the Quickener in the "new birth," the Manifestor of Jesus unto the soul, and giveth the spirit of adoption to the recipients of grace; and where the Lord God giveth grace, he most assuredly will give glory; for whom he predestinates, he calls; whom he calls, he justifies; whom he justifies, he glorifies. "What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Not all the powers of earth or hell. Our glorious Shield ever liveth; and as he lives, we shall live also; "and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Jesus has ascended on high, and sendeth gifts unto men according to their need. "Every good and perfect gift cometh from above." Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The Holy Spirit did not work until Jesus was glorified (John vii. 39). When the Spirit's work is done, and all things are subdued unto Jesus, then shall the Son be subject unto him who hath put all things under him; that God may be all in all. O my soul, what glorious things are wrapped up in mystery. The ONE in essence, the distinction of Persons, and the separate power of operation in the Three, are revealed as blessed subjects for faith, where understanding fails. The sun, the shield, the grace, the glory, and the good, all manifest the operations of the Three Persons in One Lord God; to whom, under the shelter of the blessed and all-powerful Shield, we would ascribe all honour, glory, power, and dominion.

OCT. 7.—*Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.*—

MATT. xiii. 46.

Hast *thou*, my soul, found this pearl of great price? Art thou willing to sell all that thou hast to purchase it? Lord, the kingdom of Heaven cannot be purchased, it is thy free gift; but when the heart is touched with the fire from the altar; when the voice is heard, "this is the way, walk ye in it;" when the kingdom of heaven is revealed as not to consist in "meats and drinks, and outward washing;" when the sting of sin is felt, bitterness of heart experienced, and Jesus lifted up in thy sight as the only name whereby thou canst be saved, then the soul feels like the merchantman with the pearl of great price before him, it would give all its possessions to call Jesus "my Saviour, and to have joy and peace in the Holy Ghost." But no, this cannot be, the wealth of the world cannot purchase the kingdom of heaven. But oh, when the Saviour of sinners is revealed to the sin-stricken soul; when peace of conscience by the blood of the Lamb is realized; when self is humbled, and Jesus exalted, and the kingdom of heaven *believed* to be a pearl of such a price as to cost the sacrifice of the Son of God, is not the soul in such a case, as to be willing to sell all to retain the precious gift? Oh yes, for "what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" The gift of eternal life is a pearl of great price indeed; the gift of the Son is a pearl of great price, which the Father gave, that whosoever believeth on him may never perish. Jesus is "the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." His love was stronger than death; he gave his life to ransom sinners, and now ever liveth, that they may ever live

l reign with him in glory. My soul, why cleavest thou to the dust, with this soul-transporting, earth-animating prospect before thee? Why does flesh murmur and rebel, the spirit sink, and trifles tease? Soon shall death sum up the whole; "dust thou art, to dust shalt thou return;" the grave receive thee, and worms destroy thy body," yet thy "Redeemer liveth," and in thy "flesh shalt thou see God." Jesus is risen, and will come again in power and great glory, to gather together his elect from the ends of the earth, to reign for ever with their Lord. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

18.—*Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*—JOSHUA i. 9.

The Lord speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. Blessed experience, when the Lord speaks to the soul. "Have not I commanded thee?" This is sufficient to give strength and courage; to banish fear and dismay. Then the promise, "for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." What did Joshua need more than this? Nothing. The Lord's commands, the Lord's promise, the Lord's presence! The battle is the Lord's, and victory is sure. There is no shrinking from fear, no halting between two opinions, no conferring with man and blood; no questionings, cavillings, or delays. Joshua acts promptly; the Lord commands, confirms, upholds, guides, protects, and gives the victory. The battle may be long, brethren betray, and enemies be strong; yet victory is certain when the Lord commands, and promises his presence. The

heart may sicken at delay, a slight discomfiture cause a Joshua to lie prostrate, but the Lord will arouse; "get thee up," is there not a cause? Joshua may cry, "Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan." Oh how often do we say, would to God we had never done this, or that; gone here, or stayed there. Unbelief seizes the soul, and God is neither trusted nor believed. But the Lord will finish what he has begun; nothing can frustrate his designs, impede his way, or break one link in his chain of providences; all shall be accomplished, though man may oppose and rebel. "Have not I commanded thee?" "Am not I with thee?" Lord, this assurance is enough; but thou must also give faith to believe thy word: for though the result hangs not on man's faith, but on thy will, yet the soul's comfort is in believing. Lord, strengthen my faith. Help me to look unto thee, the author and finisher of all.

OCT. 9.—*The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish; but he casteth away the substance of the wicked.*—PROV. x. 3.

We cannot view the Proverbs of the wise man as merely moral precepts; we must extract from them something spiritual, or the soul is not satisfied. The fluttering butterfly perches on flower after flower for a moment, rapid in its movements, and stays not to gather a particle of the sweets that lie deeper than its powers and unsettled nature can reach. The little bee how different! It seems not to heed the glowing colour, or be satisfied with the mere inhaling of the perfume. It enters the deepest recesses of each favoured flower, sucks the sweets, loads its legs, and

fills its tiny body ; carries off the store, lays it up, adding and adding little by little : returns again and again to the same spot, gathering sweets at every visit. My soul would fain be like this little monitor in coming to the Scriptures (Prov. vi. 6) ; not flutter over them, reading much and gathering little, but it would extract the honey that lieth in the spiritual application. Better is it to read little and gather much, meditate and digest, than flutter over the surface, skim the letter, and get nothing for the soul to feed on or to cheer the heart.

Holy Spirit, give the light to look deeper than the letter ; help to lift the veil, and gather from the text some gospel honey.

What saith the preacher ? "The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish." Does not the Lord give the spiritual appetite, so that "to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet ?" "Blessed are ye that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for ye shall be filled." Who the righteous are is established ; there are none righteous in themselves. Those alone are righteous who are justified in Jesus ; these shall never perish, neither shall they famish for want of that living bread which cometh down from heaven. The Lord will not suffer it—this is the blessedness, the certainty : the power is in the Lord, "He is faithful and true." He that keepeth Israel doth not slumber ; he that watcheth the sheep, will not suffer one to famish. "Of all that the Father giveth me I have lost nothing, but will raise it up at the last day." Oh my soul, for that precious faith, to realize without reservation the word of the Lord. How would care and carping, cutting and contriving, *fears and doubts* for the future, be set at rest, if the

Lord were really trusted, and his word believed in from the heart; but to-morrow is thought of, when to-day is scarcely begun—the future feared, when the past has proved the Lord's faithfulness, and his word professed to be believed in. "He casteth away the substance of the wicked." "Reprobate silver shall men call them." All the offerings, the sacrifices, the self-righteous deeds, the duty performances, the trumpeted alms deeds, the long prayers and vain repetitions, standing in the synagogues and corners of the streets; the substance of the will worship of the unrenewed, will the Lord cast behind his back, with the sins of his redeemed. "The Lord looketh upon the face of his anointed," in whom only a soul can be accepted, through whom alone access is obtained to the Father, the Spirit operating and testifying thereto. O Lord, thou wilt not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish. Eternal praises unto thee, O Lord.

OCT. 10.—*I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan.*—DEUT. iii. 25.

No, Moses was to die in faith, he had no inheritance in the earthly Canaan; he was not to pass the earthly Jordan. Moses prayed to the Lord with the desires of the flesh; but he did not pray according to God's will, therefore his prayer was not answered. Moses desired to see with his fleshly eyes the good land, for which he had been the instrument in bringing the children of Israel through the wilderness, fighting the battles of the Lord, that they might go in to possess it; but the Lord would not hear. Moses must be content to view the land afar off. The Lord will not comply with the requests of his people, just

because they ask. Ah, how vain is man to suppose that God will change his purposes at his creatures' importunity. "The Lord is of one mind, and who can turn him?" "If ye ask in faith, nothing doubting, it shall be done;" but God must give the faith, and this can only be given in accordance with his will. Men continue their fleshly petitions, saying, Surely God will hear for our much speaking, he will give what we ask for our importunity. But the Lord says to Moses, "Let it suffice thee; speak no more to me of this matter." And Moses was satisfied to view the land from Pisgah's top, and there to die, happy in having been the servant of the Lord; faithful as a servant, but not as the Son abiding for ever. How merciful the Lord is we know not, in withholding from us that which flesh desires. "No good thing will he withhold;" as we have lately meditated upon. He knoweth what is best; and if, my soul, thou hadst power to leave all with him, how truly wouldst thou live by the day, leaving the morrow with him, living by faith, and not desiring more sight than he be pleased to give. A child-like reliance in faith is assuredly better than fleshly importunity without the faith which is of the operation of God. "Lord, evermore give us this faith."

OCT. 11.—The Hundred and Third Psalm.

This precious song of the sweet singer of Israel must be taken as a whole, for not one verse can be selected more applicable than another. It is all most blessed, and is one of the portions of Scripture upon which my soul has feasted again and again. It embodies the whole of redemption; forgiveness of sins, *redeeming thy life from eternal death, crowning thee*

with mercy, satisfying thee with good things. The mercy, the forbearance of the Lord, is as high as the heavens, removing our transgressions as far as the east from the west. His pity for his children; His knowledge of their frame. The brevity of man's life, contrasted with the mercy of the Lord. This sweet Psalm contains enough for the soul to rest upon and be satisfied, when it feels the truth as it is in Jesus; and will it not strike the harp of praise with "bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits?" When the strings are drawn up in sweet harmony, and the Spirit's power vibrates on the heart-strings, will not the sounds go forth to the ends of the earth, could it be possible? And shall we not, so attuned call all creation to join the glorious song? Ye angels that kept your first estate—ye hosts that minister to the heirs of salvation; bless the Lord, all his works, and bless the Lord, oh my soul.

OCT. 12.—*Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*—PHIL. iv. 6, 7.

Language is often very inadequate for conveying our thoughts explicitly to another. The mis-translation from one language to another, the misinterpretation by the dark mind of man, causing a variety of opinions on one subject, misleads and confuses the mind not established by grace. Some say, "If we are to be careful for nothing, then we may leave all things at sixes and sevens, and all people get on as they list." Another says, "The apostle meant not to be over careful." Thus do men endeavour to level the Scriptures to their own standard, force meanings to their own minds, instead of conforming their minds

the meaning. "Be careful for nothing," says the apostle positively. But neither of the above suppositions accord with the analogy of Scripture. The apostle could not mean a dereliction of all temporary occupations, having admonitions to the contrary—"Labour with your own hands;" "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat." "Upon the first day of the week, let every man lay by him in store as God has prospered him;" not to increase wealth, and ease, and luxury, "to add house to house, and field to field," but "to make a collection for the saints." We take the word in its positive sense, and think "Be not anxious" might express the original meaning without ambiguity; and our "meditations" a few days since led us to view the comfort of the soul *when* it could realize a trust in the Lord for every future moment; so that this precious admonition comes to confirm and establish the desires and experience of the soul. Be not anxious about anything; leave all thy cares, thy trials, with him who careth for thee; "but everything with prayer and thanksgiving make your request known unto God." Oh my soul, how soon dost thou fall of this—in *everything* make your request known, and leave it without anxiety with him to answer thy supplication as it pleaseth him: and (then) the peace of God, which passeth understanding, *shall* keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Does prayer, and supplication, and thanksgiving, imply of necessity a continual prostration of the body? Yes, if we are to be upon our knees to make our requests, then it must be continual—"in *everything*." But, oh my soul, thou hast been instructed by God's holy word, "to worship him in spirit and in truth;" and if thou wert so privileged as

in very deed to be conformed to the apostle's injunction, thou wouldst "pray without ceasing," and that would be continual aspirations to God "*in everything.*" Heart-breathings, soul-humiliation, child-like confidence, rejoicing in the Lord at all times, asking counsel in all thy ways, and thanking him for all things. But few in this our day have arrived at this state of experience. The flesh weighs the spirit down, and darkness and spiritual barrenness appear to be the aspect of the invisible Church. What a mercy that Jesus is the same for ever; and if we have peace in him, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," thanks be to God through Christ our Lord. Thou, blessed Spirit, must quicken our dull souls; "the flesh profiteth nothing." Thou must "blow upon thy garden, that the spices may flow out." O Lord, help us truly to be anxious for nothing, and that all our peace of heart and mind may rest in Jesus, as all spiritual blessings flow to us through him.

OCT. 13.—*Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?*—SONG viii. 5.

Who is this but the Church; "the holy city, the new Jerusalem (which John saw) coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;" those "predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to the praise of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved;" "the bride, the Lamb's wife;" "the Church which Christ loved, and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, without spot," holy, and without blemish. Wonderful mystery! Glorious truth! What a sweet figure; look at it, my soul. See the redeemed coming up from the

wilderness in companies, one generation passeth away, and another cometh; they move on in succession, walking in the narrow path, the same Spirit guiding all, the same eye watching all, the same arm supporting all—"leaning on the Beloved!" Fancy a tedious journey through an unknown region, a rough and thorny path, no way-marks, no directing posts, alone in a howling wilderness; stumbling upon mountains (of error), getting into whirlpools (of affliction), falling into pits, and taken in snares; straying from the path, and scrambling, with sorrow of heart, to regain it. Imagine a friend suddenly standing before thee—and a friend too, beloved—will not joy fill thy heart, will not the rough places appear smooth, the mountains a plain, the whirlpools still waters; the pits avoided, and the snares stepped over, with the beloved by thy side? The arm to lean on, the eye to guide, the voice to comfort, wisdom to direct, and power to uphold; all this, and much more, is Jesus to his Church. The daughters of Jerusalem may say, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved?" The Church replies, "He is altogether lovely; he is the chiefest among ten thousand." He is the beloved of the Father; he has loved the Church from everlasting, and laid down his life that she might live forever. He has loved the members individually; he calleth them by name, and has gone to prepare a place eternal in the heavens. And what have each to lean on, coming up from the wilderness, but the Beloved? What strength, if Jesus be not there? what hope of getting safely to the end, without the Beloved to lean on? what peace, after being "allured into the wilderness," if Jesus "speak not comfortably?" Blessed Lord, thou dost support through all the journey;

there is no other arm to lean upon. But we often travel on as if we saw thee not, nor knew that thou wert near. We withdraw from thee, and take an arm of flesh, or try our own strength; then thou holdest our eyes, that we cannot see thee, and we stumble and fall, and should perish, if thy arm were not ever present to save to the uttermost. Thou wilt never forsake the sheep of thy pasture, which are coming up from the "washing, pure and clean," leaning on the Beloved.

OCT. 14.—*Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.*—PSALM xvii. 8.

What sense so precious as the sight? What part of the human frame so tender as the eye; how wonderfully formed, and mercifully guarded for preservation! What intense pain do we feel if it be injured; and how careful of, and jealous over it, lest we should be deprived of so great a blessing. In some small measure my soul can imagine the fervency of David's petition, and the force of the figure he uses in supplicating his God, the Lord God of Israel, to manifest his own intense exercises, and the desires of his soul. "Keep me as the apple of the eye." Surround me by thy loving-kindness, preserve me by those manifold coverings which thou, O Lord, alone can effect. Keep me by thy tender mercy from the power of mine enemies; raise an impenetrable bulwark about me, and disappoint the greedy lion of his prey. "Hide me under the shadow of thy wings." What a beautiful figure is this also! Behold the tender care of the mother bird; how she spreads her wings to shelter her little nestlings, to guard them from danger, to preserve them while they sleep, to cover them from

the pelting storm, the nipping frost and cold dews of night—and see how the little creatures nestle under “the shadow of her wings;” how they run to her in every time of need, and how readily she extends her soft feathered wings to protect them; and how comfortable do those appear who get under her downy breast, lying as it were in her bosom. Oh what a blessed position for the child of God to feel itself to be in. Kept by the Lord as the “apple of the eye;” “sheltered under the shadow of his wings;” resting safely in his love, guarded securely under that impenetrable shield, a shelter ever nigh—not one afar off—ever ready and willing to bestow every good thing “according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Lord, I would conclude my meditation with David’s petition, “Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.”

OCT. 15.—*For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.*—Ps. xxxiii. 21.

This is a blessed exercise of faith. “Our soul,” says the Psalmist, “waiteth for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.” With this assurance, and in this waiting posture, he believes without the shadow of a doubt, that “his heart *shall* rejoice in him, because he has trusted in his holy name.” When my soul meditates upon these holy and blessed exercises of faith, the transcendent and transporting praises of the God of Israel, with which at times the Psalmist comes forth with his full-toned harp, sounding in holy harmony with all the energy of his inspired soul, his “hallelujahs;” I sicken at my own dulness, and feel truly as if I had neither faith to trust the Lord, nor heart to praise him. All appear to be “laden with

thick clay ;" the things of earth, of time, and sense, engross the thoughts and occupy the hours. "Ihobod" may surely be inscribed on the habitations of those whose door-posts have been marked with the blood of the "paschal lamb." Alas, for Israel—woe unto us, if the Lord were as faithless and changeable as the dying worms for whom he hath shed his blood; woe unto us, if salvation depended on any deeds of man. Blessed Lord, we trust thee for salvation, and in thee only can our hearts rejoice; and rejoice in through eternity we shall, and praise thy holy name without weariness or cessation, for the glory which we have in our glorious Head cannot depart from us. Hallelujah !

This earthly frame, this clog of clay,
Doth sorely weigh the spirit down ;
I look and long for that blest day,
To leave the cross, and wear the crown.

Hush ! hush ! my soul, with God the Lord,
Leave every cross and every ill ;
In patience trust his faithful word,
And watch his power by standing still.

Thy heart in Christ shall yet rejoice ;
Thy song of praise shall yet ascend ;
Thou yet shalt hear the loving voice
Of Jesus, thine unchanging Friend.

OCT. 16.—*O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.*—PSALM xxxiv. 3.

The union of saints is one of the blessings of this our time-state, which we are privileged to enjoy; but to whom can we say with the Psalmist, "Oh magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together?" Divisions distract the minds of Christians; and when they come together, instead of

magnifying the Lord and exalting his name, they contend about words, and strive for "victory and not for truth." But the harps must be tuned to the same pitch; the same chord must vibrate through each soul; the hearts must realize the same treasure, and the Spirit must pour the anointing oil on each head, that it may flow down to the skirts of the clothing, for brethren to enjoy this blessed unity. When two or three are gathered together, and Jesus in the midst; when his presence is felt by the witness of the Spirit, then will the souls in sweetest harmony, and with one accord, magnify the Lord, and exalt his name only. Oh my soul, how greatly is the Lord to be magnified, how highly is he to be exalted; for has he not done wonderful things? What a low estimate we appear to have formed of the value of the soul, of the price that has been paid for its ransom, and the glory that is laid up for the redeemed. Oh ye ransomed souls, "come, magnify the Lord with me!" Look at the bleeding sacrifice on Calvary's mount; behold the agonies of soul in Gethsemane's garden; and shall we not magnify the Lord? Let us, oh let us exalt his name together, for has he not reconciled sinners to God? Exalt him, for he has vanquished death—he is risen—he ever liveth; magnify him, for he alone is worthy to be praised; exalt him, for he hath exalted us; magnify him, for he hath done marvellous things. "My soul, praise the Lord, and speak good of his name."

OCT. 17.—*But Christ is all and in all.*—COL. iii. 11.

Yes, Lord, notwithstanding all our divisions, here we unite. In thee we are one, and thou art all to

thy Church, as thou art in all thy members. In thee there are no distinctions; high or low, rich or poor, comely or uncomely, all are the same to thee. Thou art rich in mercy, and makest the poor in spirit. Thou art highly exalted, and bringest the proud low. There are none comely but in thy comeliness; there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, "but Christ is all and in all." Thou art magnified, O Lord, and thy name is exalted above every name and above all praise. "Christ is *all* and *in* all." Dost thou, my soul, *believe* this in thine heart? Dost thou believe that "Christ is formed in thee the hope of glory?" Is he all to thee? all thy hope, all thy desire, all thy glory, and all thy praise? Look at death, my soul. What hope can a sinner have out of Jesus in the prospect of eternity to a never-dying soul? What hast thou to plead but the blood of Jesus to cleanse, what to cover thee but *his* righteous robe? Christ is *all*; I feel it, I believe it. Out of him I have no hope; Christ is my only refuge, I have nothing to glory in besides. Out of him I cannot face my God.

Nor can I plead
One righteous deed,
To save my guilty soul.

"Christ is *all*." Mark this *all*—not a half-Saviour to make up the creature's deficiency, not to be put into the balance with works of duty and merit. Oh, no, "Christ is all," and glory to his name, he is *in* all, has done all, suffered all, redeemed all, will glorify all, and will gather all his elect from the ends of the earth, without respect of person, and bring all with him, when there shall be one fold under one Shepherd.

JOHN 18.—*The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; for the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.—*
2 JOHN i. 2.

"Whom I love in the truth!" This is another time-state privilege, yet a bond of union for eternity. The love for Christ's sake is far beyond the love of nature. One ends with death; the other will never terminate, because united in Christ. "And not only I," says the aged apostle, "but all they that have known the truth." Christ is the "truth," and loving for the truth's sake is founded on the love of Jesus. This is the true Christian love of the brethren—"The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth." But where shall we look for the Christians now who love purely for the truth's sake? It is the love of flesh, the love of nature, the love of gain, the love of self, the love of ease, the love of station, which predominate. Christians are far gone from the simplicity of the gospel. In truth, it is now as when this highly-favoured disciple wrote his epistle, "many deceivers are entered into the world," and we scarcely know who are true brethren. Many profess the truth, who have not the love of Jesus in the heart. Many profess to follow him, who deny the truth from love of "filthy lucre," or "fear of man." Oh! for a restoration of apostolic times! The simplicity of Christianity, where is it? The pomp and vanity of this evil world ensnare the godly who are "rich in this world's goods," and the desire to have more of them causes the godly poor to murmur instead of submitting with cheerfulness: and we believe few are the instances where Paul's lesson has been learned, "In whatever state I am, therewith to be content." But Paul "could

do all things through Christ strengthening." The Lord himself said, "Without me ye can do nothing." Without the power of thy Spirit, thy Church, O Lord, is powerless; thy people are still of the earth, earthy; and thou who hast done all for, must work all in, them—contentment with all things, patience to bear all things, and love to the brethren in the truth for the truth's sake.

Grace be to all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

OCT. 19.—*He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.*—PSALM xl. 2, 3.

Where is the renewed soul that cannot experimentally understand the spiritual application of these words of the inspired Psalmist? Ye that can understand, ye that love the Lord, "come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" (Ps. lxi. 16). "He brought me up out of an horrible pit," the pit of nature's darkness, the pit of unbelief, the rejection of revelation, and the horrible pit of self-dependence; out of the miry clay of ignorant, proud reason and self-glory; the horrible pit of rejecting the Divinity of Jesus, and denouncing Christianity as priestcraft, judging, alas! by the conduct of nominal Christians; for blind reason could no further go; but observation and reflection were mercifully given. What power could bring a soul out of this pit? Was it in self; was it a fellow-worm? No; the power of God alone could "set my feet upon a rock, and establish my goings," and that "Rock was Christ." The Lord uses instruments to blow the trumpet and sound the ram's horn. He sends his

message "by whom he will send," and his messengers often draw the bow at a venture, unconscious that they are honoured by the Lord with a message of grace—all proclaiming the sovereignty of Jehovah. "A broken heart and contrite spirit" God alone can give, and these he will not despise. "My feet on the Rock;" "he established my goings," and the "Spirit taking of the things of Jesus, and showing them unto me." "He put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God;" praise that "Jesus came to call sinners to repentance;" praise that he had opened mine eyes, and brought me out of darkness; praise that his blood cleanseth from all sin, and his glorious robe of salvation imputeth all righteousness. Content to be a sinner, and Jesus all my salvation and all my desire, with the heart I can say, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." Many—blessed be the God of all grace—have sung, and shall sing, this new song.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," but the end is love—perfect love—gospel love, which casteth out fear. The terrors of the law are hushed by the still, small voice of peace; and many, through grace, hear the joyful sound of salvation, and trust in the Lord. O praise him, praise him, ye redeemed! Praise him, ye cleansed sinners! Praise him, ye "sanctified, ye justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Praise him, O my soul! that thou art brought out of the horrible pit, set upon a Rock that cannot be moved, with a new song in thy mouth. Alleluia! salvation, and glory, and honour, and peace unto the Lord our God, and to the Lamb!

OCT. 20.—*But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord; in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute.*—PSALM cxli. 8.

The apostles and prophets were but men; and it was only as they were more inspired by the Spirit of God, that they appear more holy, more zealous, more faithful than the disciples of Jesus in the present day. The varied experience portrayed in the Psalms of David, shows the believer in Christ that human nature in the King of Israel, the inspired Psalmist, was the same as it now is. The continual transition from praise to confession, from this to supplication; then again with holy ecstasy breaking forth into rapturous praises, with seemingly renewed energy to extol his God; so correspond with the exercises of believers now, and at all times, that as "face answereth to face," and in "the mouth of two or three witnesses" a thing is established, it is, as it were, a sealing testimony to the truth of Scripture, and that the same Spirit teacheth all. This Psalm commences with prayer and supplication. David was in soul distress; "But mine eyes are up unto thee, O God the Lord," he exclaims in this verse upon which we have been led to meditate. "In thee is my trust"—faith still holding on—"leave not my soul destitute." David was experimentally in soul destitution, notwithstanding he had been continually sounding his harp in high and glorious praises of the Lord. Thus are we led from the mountain to the valley, from the "slough of despond" to the pinnacle of exultation; from a life of sense and enjoyment of the presence of Jesus, to a life of faith and entire dependence on the Lord, when destitute of his sensible presence. "Leave not my soul destitute," is the cry, but not a fear of finally

perishing; destitute of thy felt presence, of the comfort of joy, of the spirit of praise. The Lord in mercy teaches his people a variety of lessons, that they may learn to trust him in darkness, as well as praise him in light; he brings them down that they may not be high-minded; raises them up (ere they are aware), that they may not despair. If we advance in this sweetly experimental book of inspired songs, we shall again have David's Psalm of praise full of the greatness and the majesty of the Lord. It is sweet to enjoy his presence; it is blessed to trust him when he hideth himself. Under all trials, in all circumstances, help me to praise thee, O Lord.

OCT. 21.—*I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth.*—3 JOHN 4.

Having so recently meditated on a similar passage by the same disciple, the mind has been strongly led to reject this. The former meditation did not satisfy, and there has been no apparent opening, no enlargement of soul to this text. Perhaps only those who have the oversight of the Lord's heritage can enter into the joy of "the elder," than which he had "no greater than to hear that his children walked in the truth." The question arises, "What is truth?" Were we to ask the various communities of Christians in this day, we should receive a different definition from each, judging from the apparent divisions. There is much talk about preaching the truth, holding the truth, contending for the truth; many agree on some points, yet differ in essentials; some contend that the grace doctrines (so called), in their depth and fulness, only is the truth—many hold these in unrighteousness, and many renewed souls cannot receive them.

Jesus said unto Pilate, "For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth; every one that *is of the truth, heareth my voice.*" Pilate said, "What is truth?" but like many who are indifferent about the subject of their inquiry, and idly ask questions without desiring information, he waited not for a reply. Again, Jesus says, "If ye continue in my word, ye are my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Christ then is the truth; and to preach the truth is to preach Christ. Paul saith, "But we preach Christ crucified." And again, "Some preach Christ of contention, others in love." What then? "Every way Christ is preached, and I therein rejoice." "As ye have received Christ Jesus, so walk ye in him." And this is what we consider John the elder means by walking in the truth. It appears that the disciples, while Jesus sojourned with them, were but as new-born babes; he said unto them, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Peter, for instance, showed the weakness of nature while his Lord was with him in the flesh; but when he wrote his epistles, he was a father in Christ, and could fully comprehend the deep things which babes cannot receive: yet the babe evidenced the new life as clearly as the father, but not the wisdom and knowledge. Our Lord says, "And this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." To be quickened by the Spirit, to be convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and to believe in the *heart* in the Lord Jesus Christ, are essential evidences of the election of grace; but the reception of the deep things of God is not given to all: and the knowledge

without grace availeth nothing. We therefore believe that "the truth" does not exclusively imply the doctrines of grace; but that Christ is the truth, and to believe in *Him* exclusively, entirely, fully for salvation, is the truth: and to walk in him, to follow him, in faith, and hope, and love, are the results of a union to him. When God the Spirit teacheth, knowledge is added little by little as the child can bear it; and a most blessed privilege it is to be established in the faith, "to be no more children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine." Blessed Spirit, give thy sealing testimony to what has been traced herein; keep me, I beseech thee, from "darkening counsel without knowledge;" grant me the privilege of contending for the faith, and help me to "walk in the truth as it is in Jesus."

OCT. 22.—*Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.*—PSALM xlii. 5.

Again we are brought to the experimental exercise of the believer. What renewed soul can recount the frequency of this cry in the heart? David well knew the depths of trial, the depths of sin, and the height of exaltation; yet he knew in whom he trusted, and his eyes were up unto the Lord. Truly may we continually ask, "Why art thou cast down, oh my soul?" Why, in the face of so much undeserved mercy, and such a prospect of eternal glory, why are we so often cast down? Our dear compassionate Lord said to the sleeping disciples, "Truly the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." The Lord shows us what we are in the flesh, and what his strength can do for us; at one

time cast done by a trifle, at another we stand unmoved by the fall of mountains arounds us. When left to self, the poor flesh shrinks at what distresses it. Oh the trials that "flesh is heir to!" Who knoweth the soul's bitterness? Who understands the Christian's "searchings of heart?" Who can feel for the soul-casting-down of one who has lost the help of the Lord's countenance? Those only who have travelled in the same path. Oh when the cry comes forth from the heart, "Why art thou cast down, oh my soul?" this is soul travail, which, when the trial is over, is often remembered no more. But faith revives, and with full confidence inspires the dejected soul, "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him." This is sweet experience, such as the Psalmist so often leads us into; hope under trial, confidence in darkness, trust in the Lord when he is not seen. When all is quiet, our path smooth, faith and hope in lively exercise, and love felt in the heart, then to have peace seems nothing strange; but with the soul cast down, disquieted, wave upon wave, and withal spiritual darkness, then to hope in the Lord, then to believe that praise shall again fill the soul, for the help of his countenance, is blessed faith in God; and the trial of faith being most precious, we have cause to praise the Lord for these seasons of darkness, in which we are shown our weakness and his strength: and if with David we can say, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for God," we are assured the love of the Lord is still in the heart. But when faith says, the love of the Lord is unchangeable, we look unto him, and in the midst of the cloud, the fire, or the water, sing praises to the God of our salvation.

OCT. 23.—*Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*—PSALM lv. 22.

But how continually does the soul take its burden to the Lord, and bring it away again; bearing its own burden with sorrow of heart, unable to get rid of it. How is this, my soul? Is it that thou dost not ask in faith, or that the Lord does not see fit to comply with thy request? Believing in the sovereignty of God, we believe his will to be an immutable law, which nothing can change; and we also believe that faith is his gift, and (as before stated) that he answers prayer according to his own will and eternal purpose, and not according to the faith. Yet if God give faith in asking, nothing can move the soul in the belief of receiving; and nothing can prevent the accomplishment. But if thou come to the Lord with thy burden, he will most certainly sustain thee, though thou mayest still feel the burden lie heavily upon thy heart. Come to the throne again, and yet again; and if it be not thy Father's will to take thy burden from thee, he will support thee under it, and help thee to carry it joyfully; for mark the concluding promise—nay, positive assertion, “he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.” No, gracious Lord, “the righteous shall hold on their way,” they shall never be moved from the “rock” upon which thou hast established their goings; they can never be moved from Christ, for they are one with him. All the enemies, the chief of enemies, can never move the righteous from Jesus; heaven and earth shall pass away, but thy word shall not pass away. Jesus Christ the righteous cannot be moved, and all in him are righteous; “for as he is, so are they in this world.” Cheer up, my soul; the

Lord sustaineth thee, even when thou seest him not; from Jesus thy Shepherd thou shalt never be moved, for he is faithful, though thou art "as unstable as water;" but all thy righteousness is of the Lord.

OCT. 24.—*The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork.*—Ps. xix. 1.

What does man comprehend of the wonders of creation? How far have the wisest philosophers penetrated into the glories of the heavens, and the handywork of the firmament? How far have they dived into the depths beneath; to what height have they ascended to the regions above? Man thinks he has arrived at a wonderful knowledge of creation; but with all the researches of those who have preceded, he can go "thus far and no farther." The universe is illimitable; we know not the boundaries thereof. The centre of this earth, who can get at it? In the universal scale, the knowledge of man is a speck, an atom, a nothing. The natural man sees not beyond creation; he searches into its mysteries for his own gratification, or self-glory, or to benefit his fellow-man; but to behold the glory of God in the work of his hands, is not in him. But the glory of the Christian, my soul, let us turn to this, which is, that for God's dear Son were all things created; all things were created by him and for him (Col. i. 13—16). The Christian glories in revelation, where the creating power of God is described, and his purpose of redemption unfolded. The work of creation and redemption are combined in the souls of believers; the heavens declare the glory of God in the one, and his glory is manifested on earth in the other, We see Jesus our Redeemer the Creator of all things in heaven and

earth; we see him who was "made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." We see him, "by whom and for whom all things were created," leaving the glory he had with the Father to glorify his Father upon earth. My soul delighted in the works of creation with the natural eye, but it glories in redemption with the spiritual eye.

"The heavens declare the glory of God." "All thy works praise thee, O Lord." The little we know of thy creating power, by the effects, shows us our ignorance; what we know of thy redeeming power fills us with self-abasement and self-loathing, convinces us of thy sovereignty, O Lord, and that the power which created alone can regenerate. While we view with admiring awe and wonder, the glory of God in the heavens, and his handywork in the firmament, we look with love, and love to praise thee, for the superabounding wonders of redemption. We see thy glory in the starry firmament, and the works of thine Almighty hand around; but we feel the exceeding glory of redeeming love which thou hast manifested on earth: and to the Creator as beheld in Jesus Christ, the procurer of all blessings by the Eternal Spirit, be glory ascribed for ever and ever.

OCT. 25.—*Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.*—JOB xl. 4.

Behold, I am vile! is the cry of the soul when God reveals himself by his spirit of holiness. Man is by nature self-righteous; it is a yoke which encircles him when he is unconscious of it; but when the Lord speaks and gives a spiritual sight of the

depravity which lies deeply within, will he not in experience, if not in words, respond to Job, "I am vile; what shall I answer thee?" What can a soul conscious of sin reply to God? "I will lay mine hand upon my mouth;" the lips must be closed, the tongue silent when God speaks out of the whirlwind. Is there no help, no remedy, for the sin-stricken soul? Is it to lie down in silence, and to writhe for ever under a sense of unpardoned guilt? Is not the confession of sin a work of grace; and does not ceasing from self-justification give hope? Yes, these are evidences of grace, and there is a "daysman" near to speak peace to the broken heart, to reconcile sinners to God. "Mine eye seeth thee, and I abhor myself in dust and ashes." Pardon applied by the blood of Jesus, the tongue is loosened, and the lips utter the praises felt in the heart. "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee?" Canst thou not give an answer of the hope that is in thee? My soul replies, I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only hope of salvation; I believe that his "blood cleanseth from all sin," and that I am justified only by his righteousness. Behold, O God, my Surety; I am vile, but he is holy; I all sin, he without sin. When I look at self, I lay my hand upon my mouth; when I look at Jesus my mouth can only utter praise. I look at self, and am dumb; at Jesus, and shout for joy. Jesus receiveth sinners, he died for sinners, he maketh sinners righteous in the sight of God. How many are there who are toiling to make themselves righteous, and many groaning that they are not so: each proceeds from pride of heart; they are not content to be nothing, and for Jesus to be all. Those think they can make

themselves perfect; these wish to be all holiness, but feel they are not so, yet would that flesh should have somewhat to glory in. Ye toilers, give over; ye groaners lift up your heads: perfection is not for flesh and blood; it is a corrupt thing, it will lie down a vile body. Look off from poor, proud, righteous self, and sinful self, and look unto Jesus, and ye shall (if united to him) bring forth the fruits of faith unto God by your union to Christ (Rom. vii. 6).

OCT. 26.—*Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*—JOHN xiii. 1.

What a scene have we to contemplate in this feast of the Passover! What a winding up of the most special mercy of God to man, and the most wonderful events that ever took place upon earth! Jesus was come to attend the last feast under the law he would ever witness in the flesh, his ministry upon earth was done, he had fulfilled all righteousness," and was about to "finish the work," and to make an "end of the law by the sacrifice of himself." He "knew that his hour was come to depart unto the Father;" he knew also the sufferings he had to pass before he could resume the glory he had with the Father from the beginning. Behold here, my soul, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" go from the garden to the cross, and say if thou and thy fellow-mortals are anything but vile—stop at the judgment-hall, and see the spirit that is in man, and deny the vileness of thy nature if thou canst.

Blessed Lord, "was there ever any sorrow like unto thy sorrow?" Was there ever any love like unto thy

love? for having "loved thine own, thou lovest them unto the end:" not only the chosen faithful disciples, but all thine own, unto the end of time. Thy prospect of suffering hindered thee not in thy purpose of love; the scourgings, and mockings, and indignities of the worms thou couldst have annihilated with a breath, prevented not the accomplishment of thy eternal designs. Jesus came into the world to lay down his life, "to make an end of sin, and bring in an everlasting righteousness," so that there is no more sacrifice for sin. The true "paschal Lamb" was slain at this feast; but, glory to God, death could not retain him. Jesus is risen, hallelujah! He ever liveth; and because he lives, we shall live also; hallelujah! His sufferings are over; he has entered his glory; he rejoices in the work of his love; and "shall come again, bringing his sheaves with him." Praise the Lord, oh my soul.

OCT. 27.—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*—
JOHN xii. 24.

My soul, thou art to pursue the subject of thy last meditation. In this Scripture we have an elucidation of our concluding sentence, and an exemplification of the death of our Lord, who, in compassion to our weak capacities, takes his figures from those things in nature which our eyes behold. Who can number the grains of wheat that may be produced in the progress of years from one single seed? And thus may we compute the number of the redeemed; the fruit brought forth by the death of Christ, it is incalculable to man; but does not the Lord know every grain? Yes, and not one

shall be lost. It was needful that Jesus should die ; by his death he brought forth fruit ; he was the first-fruit from the dead, and his resurrection was an earnest for that of all for whom he died. "Except a corn fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." If Jesus had not satisfied God's justice by his death, not one of Adam's fallen race could have been taken into union with God. Jesus, in his Godhead, must have remained alone ; but it pleased him to make his Church partaker of his glory ; to be one with him, as he was one with the Father. When the harvest is fully ripe, his angels will gather the wheat into the garner ; the chaff shall be separated, and scattered by the wind of God's wrath. O Lord, what a mercy that any are saved from it ! But the Lord would not abide alone ; he formed a people for himself ; took their nature, that they might partake of his ; fell into the ground to bring forth the fruits of eternal life ; rose triumphantly, bringing his sheaves with him, for all are saved in him "with an everlasting salvation : " all have the benefit of his death and resurrection, and shall partake of this throne of glory. Glorious privilege ! mysterious union ! never to be fully comprehended nor appreciated until we have cast off these mortal frames ; but thy word, O Lord, is true, and faith rests in thee with adoring love and praise.

OCT. 28.—*For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.*—PSALM lxxxvi. 13.

When truly brought to view ourselves by the light of the Spirit ; when we really feel that "in me dwelleth no good thing ;" when convinced of the depravity of the heart, insubordination of the will, force of the

passions, the rule of evil tempers, ignorance of self, natural enmity against the holy ways of God, and natural impracticability of serving God in spirit and in truth, we can indeed unite with David, and say from the inmost soul, "For great is thy mercy toward me;" and why? "Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell!" Great indeed is thy mercy; for just, most just it would have been, hadst thou cast me off for ever. My soul can truly say, I have nothing in me deserving of thy mercy, but everything deserving of thy wrath. Here is mercy manifest; it is thy mercy that saves from hell; thy mercy that hath redeemed sinners from eternal death; thy mercy that hath exalted them to be at thy right hand, with thy dear Son. The greatness of thy mercy we cannot understand; we comprehend not the torments from which we are saved, nor the glories to which we are appointed. Our comprehension how weak, our praise how dull, our love how cold, and faith how fluctuating. Lord, it is thy mercy from first to last, and *thy* love which endureth for ever.

Thy mercy saves, thy mercy keeps,
Let thy redeemed praise thee;
Thy mercy guards thy slumbering sheep,
Let thy redeemed praise thee.

OCT. 29.—*And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.*—MARK xi. 22.

Faith in God, and faith given by God, is the only faith that can remove mountains. In this faith there is no doubting; belief is established in the heart by God, and whatever is asked for shall be granted. But what is the faith of the Church now? It cannot command mountains; it cannot control the waves; it cannot perform miracles; these special gifts are withdrawn.

but the Lord still bestows a measure of faith for the comfort of his people, and for the manifesting of his power. Is there not under trial "faith in God" given to many who are wading in deep waters? When he is not seen, does not faith in him keep the soul from sinking? And though we have not that faith given to move mountains, yet the Lord mercifully bestows faith in every time of need, according to the good pleasure of his will. He gives faith in his word, in his promises; and when these are applied with power, how does the soul mount with "eagles' wings" above the petty things of earth. Oh when we have faith in God to trust him for all things, leaving the future with him, believing that he appoints all, and rules all with infinite wisdom, this is to "be still and know that I am God:" a feeble creature resting upon the arm of omnipotence, and with child-like dependence trusting a kind and loving Father. It is precious to "have faith in God;" to bless him for past mercies and to-day's mercies; and to leave to-morrow in perfect confidence with him. Praising for the past—trusting for the future. "Lord, evermore give us this faith."

OCT. 30.—*Many of the ancient men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice, and many shouted aloud for joy.*—EZRA iii. 12.

Having already meditated upon the surpassing glory of the second temple to the first, seeing that the Lord of glory was there to show himself openly; that the "Desire of all nations" was to fill this second house with a glory that neither Solomon with all his wisdom, nor the law with all its sacrifices, could give; the mind is now led to reflect on the weeping and shout-

ing at the laying the foundation of this second temple. We see the varied exercises of the human mind; what is intense grief to one will be a subject of the greatest joy to another. Why did the ancient men weep, and wherefore did many shout aloud for joy? Probably each were under the influence of their fleshly feelings. The ancient men had seen the first house, with all its earthly splendour and glory; but, instead of praising the Lord for their restoration after the seventy years' captivity, and his putting it into the heart of Cyrus to permit them to rebuild their temple, instead of being contented with the present mercy bestowed, they weep for the loss of the past. And those who shouted, with what, may we suppose, were their minds exercised? Perhaps, by ignorance. They had not seen the first house; and, it may be, many knew not why they shouted; but some assuredly joined the shout of joy from the right cause. Haggai prophesied of the glory of the latter house, and those to whom it was revealed saw, by faith, the day of the Messiah afar off, and were glad. Who bring most glory to God?—those who are repining for the past, discontented with the present, and anticipating evil for the future: or those who leave the past, are thankful for the present, and resign the future passively into the hands of their Lord?

Pride and ignorance predominate greatly in the mind of man; and many Christians are kept in bondage by these, until the Lord be pleased to strip them and instruct them. The convinced sinner weeps under a sense of guilt. Pride cannot look out of self, and ignorance cannot see, neither believe in, the finished work of Jesus; but when the Lord reveals himself in his glory, when he comes to his temple

(2 Cor. vi. 16), and proclaims pardon, the soul shouts for joy, and truly sees the second temple far more glorious than the first. Jesus was there. The bright and morning Star has arisen in the weeping soul, and glory to God and praise to the Lamb is the continued shout of joy.

OCT. 31.—*And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I flee away, and be at rest.*—
PSALM iv. 6.

Oh! if poor human nature had wings like the dove! if it could rove at its pleasure, fly where it list, free and uncontrolled! But, happily, the wings are clipped, and Almighty power chains it to earth until he be pleased to call the spirit from its tenement of clay.

"Oh! if I had wings like the dove," says flesh, "I would fly from this trial; I would leave this wicked world, this body of sin, these false friends, these persecuting enemies. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest. I would fly to my eternal rest, where sorrow, nor pain, nor sin can come." But does not the believer learn what a mercy it is that God restrains the desires of the flesh, that we cannot do as we would, nor fly where we like, nor stay where we choose, nor run from our trials? Into a thousand snares would our wings rapidly fly, had we the power of the harmless dove, whose instinct, given by the Almighty Creator, guides her only to what nature prompts; but man, unrestrained by the Almighty, would be a very fiend; and even the renewed soul would fly continually into forbidden paths, if it had all that flesh desired. But if, under a heavy trial, one is led to say in the agony of the

moment, "Oh that I had wings like the dove!" a time will arrive when, like David, the cry comes, "I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me."

What a mercy, my soul, to be satisfied with all the ways of the "Most High;" neither to wish for the wings of the dove, nor the strength of the lion, nor the fleetness of the deer, but to believe that infinite love regulates every pain, overrules every evil for good; and that trials are most blessed corrections to keep the child from soaring above its appointed sphere, or grovelling beneath its high calling in Christ Jesus. Soon shall the message come to call thee home; then shall thy spirit flee from all below. Earth and all its vanities, with sin and all its trials, shall vex thy soul no more. Thou shalt not need the "wings of the dove" to carry thee to the bosom of thy Lord.

NOVEMBER.

Nov. 1.—*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.*—ROM. i. 16.

How boldly did Paul testify to the truth of what he wrote with the pen of inspiration! "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." He neither feared men nor their revilings. Neither kings nor governors could stop him from proclaiming the gospel of Christ; neither perils nor imprisonments daunted him. He could do all things through Christ strengthening him. This he felt; he knew his weakness, and where his strength lay, and, when weak in himself, was strong in the Lord, that flesh should not glory. The

Gospel of Christ the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth! The gospel is glad tidings of great joy; but the power of God must be put forth for any to believe to the saving of the soul. "Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God must give the increase." The seed is scattered, but God must make it spring. Christ is preached, but none believe savingly but those whom the Spirit quickens. The seed drops into the heart of one, and takes root; while the heart of another under the same word remains impervious, the ears closed, the eyes darkened. It must be the power of God; and thus he chooses to reveal himself "through the foolishness of preaching." It is neither the instrument that proclaims the glad tidings, nor the word of truth that is preached, which touches the heart with a saving knowledge of Christ. The Spirit must accompany the word, and this is "the power of God unto salvation."

O my soul! give God the glory. Did ye receive the Spirit by the works of the law? Nay, but by the hearing of faith. Christ proclaimed as the only name whereby we can be saved, is the gospel of Christ. Christ preached, and not the law, is the gospel of glad tidings. Christ as the sinner's only hope, not mixed up with the works of the law and the deeds of the flesh, is the gospel of peace; and the "gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will unto men. Hosannah to the Lord!

Nov. 2.—*Thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise.*—ISAIAH lx. 18.

The walls of the new Jerusalem are "salvation."

It is not a "building made with hands," but one "eternal in the heavens." It is not confined to the Jew, but admits the Gentile also. The wall of partition, which was the "law by Moses," being broken down, salvation is proclaimed to those who were afar off. And "thy gates shall be praise;" for truly those who enter in must with one accord cry, "Worthy the Lamb that was slain!" Praise must fill the heart of the sinner who knows the pardoning love of Jesus. When experimentally brought within the walls of salvation, the heart will leap for joy; praise and thanksgiving shall be upon the tongue, and the mouth shall utter ten thousand psalms to "Him who hath redeemed us out of all nations, kindred, and tongues."

The walls of salvation shall stand for ever; they are founded upon a Rock which cannot be moved. The gates of hell shall not prevail to overthrow them, neither shall their gates be shut till the number of the elect be accomplished. The inspired Psalmist in the spirit of prophecy testified of Jesus; and Jesus himself speaks through the prophet, "Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord; this gate of the Lord into which the righteous shall enter." Jesus, as the Forerunner, is for us entered within the veil (Heb. vi. 19, 20); and all whom he maketh righteous shall assuredly follow. "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Be thankful unto him, and bless his name."

"Thy walls salvation and thy gates praise;" the holy city where God and the Lamb are the light thereof.

Nov. 3.—*Take no thought for the morrow. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*—MATT. vi. 34.

These words of our Lord confirm a former meditation, and while I reflect upon them, condemnation arrests me. "Take no thought for the morrow." Why, we are all thought for the future. We anticipate trials before they come, and thereby have a double suffering. We anticipate troubles that never arrive. We profess to believe that all things are ordered; yet distress ourselves as if all depended on our own management. Why, O Lord, is this over-anxiety for the things of time; why can we not leave the morrow with thee? If it usher in evil to us, then wilt thou give sufficient strength to bear it to those who trust in thee. How much more do the perishing things of time engross our attention than the eternal realities of the "kingdom of God and his righteousness!" Judging ourselves by the standard of the "word of God," how can a professed Christian be at peace whom the "Son hath not made free" from condemnation? The law is a code of condemnation, and trying to work out our own salvation by that, we shall never enter the kingdom of God; "for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified." O ye self-righteous, ye law-workers, try yourselves, examine yourselves by God's word, and are ye at peace with yourselves? are ye conformed to this world, slaves to its follies, its vanities, its customs? and are ye in peace? But if the cry of Job has been uttered from the heart, "Behold, I am vile;" then ye can neither have peace in yourselves nor the law. It is the healing balm of salvation by Christ only that can

Make a wounded spirit whole.

The law, which bringeth condemnation to the

renewed soul, is a source for self-glory to the self-righteous; but the eyes of nature are blind to spiritual things, and the ears closed to the sound of gospel peace until the Spirit works with power on the soul, and then we learn that "there is a law in our members, warring against the law of the mind, and we cannot do the things that we would;" that Jesus only can deliver from this body of death; and to give him all the praise is the convinced sinner's glory. "For whom the Son makes free is free indeed."

Nov. 4.—*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*—DEUT. xxxiii. 27.

Blessed be the God of Israel, he does not confine himself to the seed of Jacob, nor is he the refuge only of Asher. The eternal God is the refuge of all his people from the commencement of time, and shall be so to the end. What a cheering reflection! What a mercy to feel the truth of it with power! The eternal God thy refuge! as thy Saviour and thy preserver! a refuge in every storm, in all trials, "and underneath are the everlasting arms." O my soul! to realize this blessedness, to feel assured the everlasting arms of Omnipotence are under thee: held up by the power of God—a refuge in every time of trouble—supported by invisible power! We cannot comprehend the power by which we are sustained, neither can we express what we feel. The soul at times seems overwhelmed at the vastness of divine subjects, which the heart feels, but words cannot explain. "Happy art thou, O Israel! Who is like unto thee, O people? saved by the Lord, the Shield of thy help, and who is the Sword of thy excellency!"

Nov. 5.—*The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me.*—PSALM cxxxviii. 8.

The Lord alone can perfect anything, and the Lord will perfect that which he has purposed; and when he hath perfected all that concerneth thee, my soul, he will take thee to thine eternal home. The Lord will perfect all that concerneth every individual, and when all is perfected, then "time shall be no more;" but the end is not yet, although it is at hand. The Lord only knoweth the times and seasons. But one thing we do know, the work of salvation is perfected. It was finished when Jesus died on the cross, and "there is no more sacrifice for sin," no other way of access to God; "no other name whereby we can be saved." Jesus performed a perfect obedience to the law, was a perfect sacrifice for sin. Jesus perfected all the Father gave him to do. The Holy Spirit shall perfect his work in calling; and when the end cometh, and the ransomed souls shall be united to the glorified bodies, all will be perfected, and perfect peace, and love, harmony, and union shall be established for ever. "The Lord shall be an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory."

Nov. 6.—*For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? but if, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*—1 PETER ii. 20.

It is a hard thing for flesh and blood to be buffeted for doing well, and to take it patiently. To be patient when corrected for our faults is easy and natural; but the soul shrinks from false accusations, and the proud heart seeks to justify itself and prove its innocence. O my soul! what a lesson hast thou been taught!

How hast thou rebelled, and murmured, and kicked against a false accusation, striving for ways and means to prove its falsity ! but God taught thee by these words to bless and praise him that it *was* false, and then thou couldst leave it quietly with him. It appears that some do not feel actual guilt so acutely as a false charge. If our sin be concealed from the eye of man, we are but little disturbed. We fear our fellow mortal more than our God. Under a false accusation, oh, how we writhe ! instead of being thankful that we are not guilty. "Christ suffered for us, leaving an example that we should follow his steps." But Jesus had the fulness of the Godhead, and only can we follow his example as he gives the power. The Lord knows our weakness, and shows his power in us when he pleases. If flesh reign, it will rebel ; if the Spirit influence, flesh will submit. Oh, what a glorious example have we in our glorious Head ! Jesus, when he was reviled, reviled not again ; but in him was no sin, and we are all sin out of him. But Jesus bare our sins, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed.

"For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."

Nov. 7.—*But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.*—JOHN x. 26.

Let the rejectors of God's discriminating grace ponder over these words in connection with the 6th chap., 37, 39, 44 ; and Matt. xi. 27. And will they still contend that Christ died for all mankind, and yet all are not saved ? Has Christ indeed died in vain for such a multitude ? My soul, repeat again and again that it

is all of grace that *any* are saved. If God had not willed the salvation of *some*, *all* would have been lost. If men were left to their own wills, Christ would never be "formed in them the hope of glory." "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 12, 13). "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. i. 23). "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;" so there must be a supernatural life to receive them. Neither does he by natural generation inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore no man can enter the kingdom of heaven without a *re*-generation. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus iii. 5—7). All mankind "go astray from the womb;" therefore "hath he mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth." "And who art thou, oh man, that repliest against God? What if God, willing to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?" (Rom. ix. 18—23.) "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." What can be added to the testimony of Scripture?

The Spirit must apply the word, whether read or spoken. The sheep shall hear, but those who are not of the fold will not hear. My soul, thou hast been brought to believe that the power of God alone can give a saving belief; that an assent to the truths of the Scriptures is not the freedom which the Son gives: that "no man can come to Christ, unless the Father draw him;" and that "*thy sheep shall never perish!*" There is also a blessed testimony of the apostle, which cheers the heart and lifts the soul heavenward. "Nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Nov. 8.—*For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?*—ISAIAH xiv. 27.

What power can resist the Almighty? Who can frustrate his purposes, or turn his hand back from accomplishing that which he wills? But how does the mind of man shrink from contemplating the sovereignty of Jehovah, which some call foreknowledge, and some reject altogether. Balaam, with all his desires to curse Israel for the reward offered, could not speak one word beyond what the Lord commanded; and acknowledged he had no power to reverse the commands of the Lord. The sovereignty of God received into the heart, is a sweet truth for the soul to rest upon; that he rules all, has purposed all, and shall accomplish all; that a beautiful chain of providences is linked together, not one link of which can be broken, all harmonizing with God's eternal mind, where man sees nothing but confusion. That faithful minister of Christ, John Newton—that monument of God's mercy and grace—recommends three books for the Christian

to study; viz., the book of Revelation, the book of Creation, and the book of Providence. Oh my soul, what blessings are contained in the first; what wonders do we behold in the second; what harmony in the third; yet the half of either short-sighted man cannot behold. But God is in all, though his glory be hid from us, his power concealed, and the links in the chain seldom discerned. When we can view with faith's eye, and believe in our heart, that the Lord has purposed all events, and "who shall disannul?" how it quiets the murmurings for the past, sets at rest all disquietude for the future, and enables us to be passive under present trials. Oh it is sweet, it is most precious, to trust the Lord unreservedly, and for faith to say, "If the Lord has purposed, *we* cannot disannul; if his hand be stretched out, *we* cannot turn it back." Faith says, thy future path is settled; thy going out and thy coming in; "the bounds of thy habitation" set; and thou canst not by taking thought "add one cubit to thy stature, nor make one hair white or black," or alter the Lord's purpose concerning thee. Oh how rebellious is unbelief, under which our poor nature often sinks; but the wings of faith carry us above sublunary things; and to acknowledge God as a sovereign in all events, is to put man in his proper place, subject to him who is all in all. The soul resting with entire confidence on the Lord, leaves all concerns with him, who worketh all things together for good to those who put their trust in him. Lord, give me faith to trust thee for the events of time, as thou hast enabled me to cast my naked soul on thee *entirely* for eternal life.

Nov. 9.—*Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.*—PSALM lxxxix. 27.

The Lord Jesus Christ himself testifies that the Psalms spake concerning him (Luke xxiv. 44); and how much do we see in them that cannot be confined—or even applied in some parts—to the literal David. This Psalm is full of Christ, who in Paul's Epistle to the Colossians is styled the first-born of every creature. He was also the first-born from the dead, and has the pre-eminence in all things; all things are for the elect's sake—God's beloved Son—who is the head of his body the Church. Jesus is the Scripture-key, and with this master-key we have inexhaustible treasures unfolded, and incomprehensible things explained. In meditating on the succeeding verses, I can only understand them by seeing Jesus, the covenant head of his eternally-appointed seed; "his seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me." "If his children forsake my law, I will visit their transgressions with a rod; but my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from *him*; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." No, for the Lord our God is a sovereign; and all with him is yea and amen. Oh my soul, how little dost thou know of the wondrous things contained in this "word of God." But for what he hath revealed unto thee, be thankful, oh be thankful. Thou seest Jesus as the Mediator between thee and a God of justice; the Reconciler for sin with a God of mercy and love; and the one with whom an everlasting covenant was made, "ordered in all things and sure." "Blessed be the Lord for evermore. Amen and amen."

Nov. 10.—*Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*—ISAIAH xli. 10.

The promises of God in the Old Testament are not to be confined to the literal seed of Abraham; but are for the comfort of God's people in all ages to the end of time, when the Holy Spirit is pleased to comfort them thereby: for without a spiritual application, the word does not touch the heart. Having experienced the comfort of this text, I can testify to the truth of its blessed application to the soul, under a season of trial; but it is past, and I read it now, yes, I may say, merely read it; but whether felt or not, the promise remains the same, and may yet again come with power. But what a high privilege to have "the high and Holy One" speak to us by his word, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." How sweet to realize this, to fear no evil, for God is with thee, to strengthen thee, help thee, uphold thee with the right hand of his righteousness. Oh to *believe* this, to have the comfort of it, to prove the truth of it; to feel that God is truly with thee, and truly thy God; to have fear banished, dismay silenced, to feel strengthened and upheld when weak and ready to sink, and give all up, we then realize the promise as if God spoke to us individually; and those that "contend with thee, and war against thee, are as nothing." Blessed be the Lord for his help in time of trouble; bless him for a time of peace; bless him for trial; bless him for all; and blessed be the name of the Lord God for ever and ever.

Nov. 11.—*For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not.*—ECCLES. vii. 20.

The prophets and apostles continually testify to the total depravity of man's nature; yet in the face of that word which they profess to believe, many deny it, and many assert that they have arrived at a sinless perfection. The ignorance of man is a constant barrier to the complete knowledge of many things into which he is led to search. There are two subjects at the full knowledge of which he will never arrive in his present imperfect state; the depravity of his own nature, and the perfection of God. Ignorance of self leads man to deny his total depravity; and ignorance of what perfection is leads him to the presumptuous assertion that he is sinless. The deceitfulness of our hearts is as deep as hell, the perfection of Deity as high as heaven; what can we understand? God has no superior, therefore perfection dwelleth in him only; the self-existent, "dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto." Man has no perfection but what he derives from Jesus Christ; when united to *him*, he is perfect *in* him, and thus stands in God's sight complete, without the imputation of sin: but sin remains in his mortal members even in his renewed state, and his "cage of unclean birds" must see corruption before it will be raised a glorious body, free from sin. We are perfect, just, and good, only in Jesus, for "in the flesh dwelleth no good thing;" and as the wife partakes of all the honours of the husband, while in herself she is nothing, has nothing, can do nothing lawfully of herself, so is the Church to Christ. All things are hers by her union to him; an eternal inheritance and eternal glory are secured to all the seed. Never was there but one "just man upon earth

that did good and sinned not;" and in him the fullness of the Godhead dwelt, who only hath immortality; to whom be honour and praise everlasting. Amen.

Nov. 12.—*Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.*—ISAIAH xxxviii. 17.

These words of Hezekiah are the experience of a Spirit-taught soul; and we may deduce from them the glorious truths of the gospel. The first work of the Spirit is to convince of sin; and this must necessarily come with bitterness. The peace of the natural man is disturbed; he was at ease, faring sumptuously every day upon the husks of this world, and clothed in his own fine robes of self-approval; but the Spirit smites the heart, the peace is gone, and bitterness succeeds. The Lord deals variously with his people in calling them into the fold; some remain in thralldom for a long period, groaning over themselves, and cannot see the love that has delivered them from the pit of corruption. Others have their bands knocked off speedily, and some have them burnt off by fire: they are brought to look out of self, their own depraved hearts, and to see the pardon for sin by the one all-sufficient sacrifice. And what a merciful experience to be able to say, "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." Yes, merciful indeed to one who has writhed under a sense of sin, and felt the agony of a guilty conscience; to be delivered from the corrupt pit of nature; to view the everlasting love of God; to be assured that sin in its condemnation is, as it were, "cast into the depths of the sea," and a sinner

reconciled to God. Oh, in the language of Hezekiah we can say, "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day." "The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments, all the days of my life in the house of the Lord." Yes, we will praise thee, oh Jesus, who hath redeemed us and saved us from the curse and condemnation of sin, and washed us clean in thy precious blood.

Nov. 13.—*These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*—JOHN XVI. 33.

When meditating on passages in the Old Testament, we see in types and shadows the substance which has been revealed to us in this latter day. Jehovah in the Old Testament is the mighty God, whom we cannot approach unto and live. He appears in his acts, he speaks by his voice, but Deity is invisible to human sight. He appears in the garden of Eden, wielding the sword of justice in righteous judgment. He comes in the flood destroying an ungodly world. He confounds the Babel builders, and scatters them to the ends of the earth. He overthrows the iniquitous cities of the plain, raining brimstone and fire from heaven upon them. He comes in thunders with a fiery law unto Mount Sinai, and executes vengeance on the idolatrous people he had formed for his praise. He destroys the nations that call not upon his name; the worshippers of "gods that are no gods, the work of their own hands;" and at length comes in judgments to his own selected people, who rebelled against him.

break his statutes, and disobeyed his laws. Jehovah's attributes are as immutable as himself; his word is irreversible; justice cannot spare the guilty; but "he will have mercy on whom he will," and there are sweet specks of "mercy" which sparkle in our eyes as glittering dew-drops in the morning sun. Mercy beams forth in paradise in the first promise to our fallen parents; death was a mercy after man's new evil (Gen. iii. 22-24); the saving of Noah, the calling of Abraham, the selection of a people to keep up the remembrance of himself, and to bring forth the "Healer of the breach," was a transcendent mercy. "In the midst of judgments Jehovah remembered mercy." And we come to the New Testament as a most resplendent link in the chain of revelation. "Old things are passed away," yet remain as an everlasting testimony of the truth which came by Jesus Christ. We come to the "new dispensation" with softened hearts, with tearful eyes; for mercy, and peace, and love, shine forth with the splendour of the noon-day sun. We come into the presence of Deity veiled in flesh, made like unto ourselves, and tempted in all points (excepted) as we are, that he may be able to succour those who are tempted. When Jesus speaks, it is like the refreshing dew upon the herb, the "wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil that maketh his face to shine." He speaketh unto his disciples as a familiar friend; he prayeth not only for them, but for all who shall believe on him through their word. And what are the words which Jesus speaks in the verse to which we have been led? Are they not words of the sweetest comfort? Here is the true peace—"that in me ye might have

peace." This was not the peace which Hezekiah had before his bitterness of soul. The peace of the unrenewed soul is a false peace, it rests on any and everything but the true object, and cannot abide the fire of God's justice; but the peace in Jesus nothing can touch, for it is "the peace of God." The sword of justice, through Jesus, is placed in the sheath of mercy; "he has fulfilled all things which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him:" "and by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Ye are not to expect peace in the world—there ye shall have tribulation; but what is this to those who have peace in Jesus? Does he not say, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world?" Yes, my soul, "be of good cheer," Jesus speaks; the promised Messiah has appeared upon earth; the fiery law cannot condemn thee, for Jesus hath fulfilled it, and "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Jesus hath opened a new and living way to the tree of life, and all that eat thereof shall live for ever. What are the tribulations of this world compared with the glories of eternity? What are all its enjoyments, if we have no part in the tree of life? Oh my soul, "be of good cheer," Jesus speaks that ye may have peace in him; he has overcome the world. "Whosoever cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out; and whosoever liveth and believeth in him shall never die." God is no longer a consuming fire to those whom he beholds in his dear Son; but the sword of justice will still reach those who are not accepted in the Beloved: they shall be judged by their works, and must be condemned (Rev. xx. 10). "Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort," I

would repeat that it is all of thy mercy by Christ Jesus that any are saved ; and to him in union with the eternal Jehovah I do hope with my last breath to be enabled to ascribe all the honour, the glory, the praise. Amen and amen.

Nov. 14.—*I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought.*—HOSEA xiii. 5.

Known unto God are all things ; and my soul contemplates this knowledge with joy and thanksgiving. I think on the days that are gone, and many were the years that I passed without the knowledge of God ; the wilderness I traversed was a land of great drought indeed, but it is a blessed reflection to believe that God knew me, while I was blinded by the god of this world, and walking after the devices of my own heart. Thus the Lord knows his people from eternity, and they are preserved in Christ Jesus to “inherit the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world.” He knows them in the land of Egypt, when in gross darkness, and slaves to Pharoah, the prince of darkness. He knows them in the dry and barren wilderness, where the stream of living water is unknown. He knows them all before they know him ; he calls them in his own time, and brings them to a knowledge of himself : then they love him because he first loved them. “They have served him with their sins,” yet he wearied not, neither did he forego the purposes of his eternal love. He knows them in the wilderness, and will keep them to the end. He will give them water in the “land of great drought,” from the well which springeth up unto everlasting life, and bread from heaven which they shall not loathe ; they

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The devil's devices could not overthrow the power of the Almighty ; death was overcome when Jesus arose—his resurrection, his ascension, were glorious—his victory was glorious, and the believer, feeling that Jesus has conquered, will

“Crown him, crown him Lord of all.”

He has conquered sin, death, and hell, for a multitude which no man can number ; and glory be to him for ever and ever.

Nov. 17.—*Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.*—Psalm liv. 1.

To the soul convinced of sin, and of the total incapability of performing any meritorious works, which may in the least degree find acceptance with God, there are not more blessed subjects for meditation than the work, office, and person of Jesus Christ ; and not when convinced of sin only, but also of pardon. We are led most particularly to view the person of Christ in this portion : and if the Psalmist went no farther than temporal salvation in his prayer, we do not consider it to be straining Scripture to look at eternal salvation through the only “name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,” and then we see that Christ is God. “Save me, O God, by thy name ;” and the manhood of our Lord is manifested to our soul in the succeeding petition, “judge me by thy strength.” The fifth chapter of John's Gospel, 27th verse, showing us to whom judgment was given, and why ? “because he is the Son of Man.” It is this union of persons that is the glory of the believer in Jesus. There can be salvation in none but God. And how blessed to reflect that judgment is committed unto him who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmi-

ties ; for as David said, " Let us now fall into the hand of the Lord (for his mercies are great), and let me not fall into the hand of man." Oh let me not be judged by man. Let God be my judge, for he will do justly ; for man will cast a stone where the Lord will say, " thy sins are forgiven thee." Christ in his Godhead had all power in heaven and earth ; as man he suffered in life and death ; his infinite purity as God making the sacrifice of himself available for the sins of man. He took flesh for the suffering of death ; he took sin upon him to save the guilty from eternal suffering for sin : as God all-powerful and infinitely just, as God-man all-merciful and infinitely holy. Therefore, though he took sin *on* him, he had no sin *in* him ; " and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him " (Heb. v. 9 ; 1 Pet. ii. 24). As a sinner, we delight to contemplate the Lord Jesus as the only name whereby we can be saved from God's righteous judgment ; as a pardoned sinner, we glory in the Godhead, which makes salvation immutable as himself ; as a justified sinner, fear is cast out, the spirit of adoption received, and we say, " my Father " as well as " my Lord and my God." Thus all things meet and centre in Jesus Christ, and here is the place of our rest ; He our Saviour and our Judge, Mediator and Reconciler, Life and Immortality, our peace and hiding-place, safe from God's justice and sure of his love. Blessed Spirit, by whom these blessings are revealed, help us, thy redeemed, " to run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

Nov. 18.—*We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners.*—

PSALM XX. 5.

Shall we be weary of the theme of salvation? The world do not weary of their pursuits; the man of business day after day continues the same round of zealous activity in his calling; the man of pleasure wearsies not in wasting his time, and spending the wealth which the former is toiling to secure. With what unwearied assiduity does the philosopher spend his time, sacrifice his health, stretch his intellect, to span the heavens and number the stars; to compass the earth, searching therein and thereon. The artist, the man of science, do they weary with years of labour, nay a whole life, spent in one pursuit? And shall the believer in Jesus weary of a subject in which their best, their eternal interest is involved? Shall we say we have had enough of the Psalms of David, of Christ and his salvation? God forbid that we should thus think. The more we meditate on things above, the less are we concerned with things below; as the value of salvation, and the certainty of eternity rise in our estimation, the perishing concerns of earth sink in the scale. The pursuits of the natural man end with this life; and oh, if he have no part in the great salvation, what is his wealth, his knowledge, his pleasure, in which he has luxuriated? But assuredly, to the spiritual the glorious subject of salvation cannot tire, though we come to it at "evening, morning, and at noon." My soul, can you not join with the Psalmist, "We will rejoice in thy salvation?" Yes, truly, it is here we *do* rejoice; "and in the name of our God will we set up our banners," for "we have sat under his shadow with great delight, and his banner over us

was love." What have we to rejoice in equal to this great salvation? Are we ashamed to set up our banner in the name of our God? The banner inscribed with everlasting love, signed with the blood of the cross, and sealed with the testimony of the Spirit. Shall we be ashamed to acknowledge Jesus as the *whole* of our hope and salvation, that we believe his work is finished and complete, and that no works of the creature can merit anything beyond what Jesus has merited, procured and *secured*, entirely, fully, and freely for his Church? We repeat, "God forbid;" so that we will rejoice in thy salvation—*thy* salvation, O Lord—and in *thy* name only will we set up our banners till the last breath, giving all honour, and glory, and praise, again and again to Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Nov. 19.—*Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation.*—PSALM lxxviii. 19.

How prone is man to look at the dark side; to groan over certain deprivations, without balancing them with the daily mercies by which he is surrounded. But some exercised believers will say, "It is very easy to bless the Lord when we are really loaded with daily benefits; but to see a hungry little group by your side when the cupboard is empty, and no earthly prospect of getting a morsel or a garment to cover their half naked bodies, oh it is hard then to say 'the Lord loadeth us with daily benefits;' we are more inclined to cry, 'God hath forsaken us.'" This is very natural; flesh feels the trial, and cannot be reconciled to it, or bless the Lord for benefits when it is laden with misery. But the Spirit leads differently,

teaches mysteries that flesh can neither understand nor relish ; and many believers under the severest trials and deprivations, are enabled to say, "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits." They are strengthened by an invisible hand, and look at things not seen ; they look off from temporal trials, and see the daily spiritual benefits bestowed upon them, "even by the God of their salvation." Many and sweet are the spiritual refreshings with which the tried believer is loaded ; he sees more of his God and his power in times of adversity : his faith is tested, his hope and trust proved, and he is drawn out to behold the great and exceeding benefits daily bestowed upon the redeemed by the God of their salvation. He can bless God it is not worse, and for the hope given that times will be better. He can also rejoice that he has an almighty God to look unto, and a merciful Saviour to lean upon ; and that when his mortal tabernacle is dissolved, he has a "building eternal in the heavens." He can look unto Jesus "who ascended on high, and received gifts for the rebellious ;" thus loading them with benefits the world knows nothing of ; and all these benefits are not confined to station nor circumstances. The prosperous Christian has need also of the experience of them, or his temporal prosperity is misery. When under a sense of sin revealed by the Holy Spirit, without realizing by faith the benefits of salvation, though the soul may be able to bless God for the daily temporal mercies, yet would he rather cry, "Take all from me, Lord, but give me the experience of thy pardoning love ; let me bless thee for the daily benefits of salvation, with which thou loadest thy spiritual Israel." Thus a spiritual sense of sin (which widely differs from a conscientious sense)

without the application of pardon, makes the rich man poor in spirit; while the poor tried believer, loaded with the daily spiritual benefits, is rich in faith, rejoicing in the God of his salvation: both are precious in the sight of the Lord, the kingdom of heaven belonging to the "poor in spirit," as much as to the "rich in faith," who are under the enjoyment of the blessings and benefits of "redeeming love."

Nov. 20.—*Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth.*—
PSALM LX. 4.

If thou givest, O Lord; who can take away? The tribes of Israel had each their banner, by which they encamped in the order prescribed; they were each to "pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house;" and when they moved, all was regularity, no confusion: the place of each was settled by command, and their standards displayed. What is the standard of the Christians? What banner do they display? By what do they pitch, and how do they move? The visible Church, we see, is full of discord, each, as Israel, displaying their own standard; but the invisible Church has one standard by which the tribes pitch, Jesus Christ one banner over them, which is love, and this they display because of the truth—one faith, one baptism, one Lord; and what a rich mercy that their standard cannot be taken from them. When the banner of love is put over them, the standard of truth displayed, no man can conquer, neither can sin nor Satan prevail; "for stronger is he that is for us, than all that are against us." The spiritual, the one true Church, is pitched by its immutable standard, and nothing can change or alter

its position ; nothing can frustrate their standing in Christ ; nothing separate them from his banner of love ; nothing divide the spiritual union of the tribes from each other, nor from their glorious leader, who is gone before them, has entered the "new and living way," and all shall follow over whom the banner of love is displayed. "His own right arm has gotten him the victory." He has conquered what man could not, and has restored an eternal inheritance which was forfeited through sin, and which man himself could never regain. "Thou art worthy for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people ; and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

Nov. 21.—*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ?*—ROMANS viii. 35.

The apostle is persuaded that nothing can ; for it is the love of God, "which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." See, my soul, what a list he gives ! in which assuredly all things in heaven and earth are included ; and is not this a glorious subject for thy meditation ? Some say our disobedience to God's commands will separate us, our failing in evidential good works, or committing sin. But "we have not so learned Christ ;" for truly do we believe that, did our eternal union to Christ depend on our obedience, evidences, or sinlessness, we must inevitably be eternally separated from him. The union of Christ to his Church is indissoluble ; nothing can separate them. "His sheep shall never perish ;" and the law of the "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," is love to Jesus. The "love

of God being shed abroad in the heart, we serve him in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter ;” and “ being renewed in the spirit of our mind,” we are not under “ the righteousness which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of faith,” which indeed saith, “ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ?” for, “ we are saved through grace and not by works,” and are of the circumcision (not made with hands), which worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” Who, then, my soul shall separate thee from Christ ? Oh ! if I look at self, I see nothing to merit salvation ; but looking at myself in Jesus, I see nothing can condemn. Jesus hath redeemed us from the curse of the law ; shall we, therefore, love sin ; shall we glory in our shame ; shall we continue in sin that grace may abound ? God forbid ; and though we “ feel a law in our members warring against the law of our mind,” yet we delight in the “ law in the inner man ;” and being persuaded that “ in the flesh” dwelleth “ no good thing,” we do most heartily rejoice in the belief that nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Nov. 22.—*Put on, therefore, holy and beloved, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.*—COL. iii. 12.

We have now to meditate upon an admonition of the apostle, and to observe the beautiful accordance with our last meditation. The admonition is not given as conditional to salvation, but as an exhortation to the elect of God to bring forth the fruits of the new man. I have read and re-read the whole chapter

at this time, as if I had never read it before, though it has been a most precious portion of God's word unto my soul; and as I read, my heart sinks in sadness, and the spirit is deeply depressed. Surely, if anything could separate us from Christ, we should have little chance of ever appearing with him in glory. The present manifestations of Christianity exhibit to us a mere shell when compared with the exhortations of the apostles; and we are persuaded that if our salvation were conditional, depending on the exercises of those spiritual graces to which the apostle exhorts, heaven would be very thinly peopled. But, blessed be the God of all grace! the salvation of the soul depends not on the creature's doings; but would to God the Spirit were poured out upon our Israel, that the elect of God might manifest somewhat of the "bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering," "forbearing one another and forgiving one another, even as Christ hath forgiven them." So convinced art thou, my soul, of the shortcomings of the Christians in practice (again I say), that all out of Christ is condemnation; but as "there is no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus," nothing can separate us from his love. This is our peace, our hope, our faith; and we do feel a something within which testifies that we do not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit; desiring and longing to be delivered from this body of death, which Jesus hath redeemed, so that it shall rise a glorious body, though it goeth into the grave a vile one; while we can thank God through Jesus Christ, that "the body is dead because of sin," and that "our life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." Amen and Amen.

NOV. 23.—*She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace : a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.*—

PROV. iv. 9.

We must again dive into the spirituality of the words of the wise man, which imply something beyond what nature bestows, in the exceeding excellency which he ascribes to wisdom. All agree that in the 8th chapter particularly, Christ is prefigured under the title of Wisdom ; and in this view we can well understand, that "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom : she is more precious than rubies ; length of days is in her right hand." "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold of her." "The Lord by wisdom founded the earth. "He made all things by Jesus Christ." "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John i. 1). Seeing "Wisdom" in this most blessed aspect, we can come to the words of the text with delight to meditate again on Him "who of God is made unto us Wisdom," who shall give to thy head an ornament of grace." Holiness to the Lord," was to be written on all the vessels of the sanctuary, and so of the spiritual temple. The vessels of mercy are set apart or sanctified by the grace of God, and they become holy or sacred to him. They are marked in the forehead ; for "the Lord knoweth them that are his." Wisdom, or Jesus, by the Spirit sends gifts and graces unto his Church, and assuredly Wisdom bestows on the Head of the Church the most precious ornaments of grace, and he presents unto himself a glorious Church, and a crown of glory laid up for all those who love the Lord. Jesus was

power in keeping the enemies of the true Church from their Satanic persecutions, should fill our hearts at this time; for the great enemy is at the door, and only the power of God restrains the ravening wolf from dispersing and devouring the flock of Christ. But, oh, blessed be God! they can only kill the bodies. Fear not men, but fear Him who hath power over body and soul. With the fear of God before thine eyes, the love of Jesus in thy heart, and the upholding power of the Spirit, thou canst defy men and devils to do their worst. They cannot take the crown of glory, the eternal life, from Christ's mystical body, which is one with him. Though they suffer here, they shall reign with him hereafter, and with their "harps and golden vials full of odours, the prayers of saints, shall sing a new song to the Lamb that was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, and we shall reign on the earth."

Nov. 25.—*Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.*—PSALM cxlvi. 5.

"And this God is our God for ever and ever." Israel's God is the God of the Christian, and Israel's Messiah is the Messiah of the Gentiles. But Judah rejects the only way of salvation, rejects "God manifest in the flesh," and is given up to blindness and hardness of heart. "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," are the words of him whose "kingdom was not of this world;" and until Judah receives Jesus as the substance of all their shadows, and, through him, "worship God in spirit and in truth," instead of laws and ceremonies, they reject the God

of their fathers. "Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but, seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts xiii. 46). And in truth "happy is he who hath the God of Jacob for his help." This little Psalm is a powerful evidence of the Divinity of the Lord Jesus to those who do not reject him altogether. O my soul! these are blessed evidences to thee. The rejection of revelation entirely is not so inconsistent as the denial of the Divinity of Jesus by those who receive the Scriptures as the "word of God;" preaching Jesus as a prophet, and rejecting all that can give a sinner any hope of the salvation of the soul. "O happy is he whose hope is in the Lord his God." To reject Christ as God is an awful inconsistency, I repeat, and a fearful delusion; but there is a worse delusion as to its moral effects than this, which is not an inconsistency, but a Satanic delusion over the minds of men, a diabolical mockery of our most precious faith, the holy religion of the Anointed of God, by whom he made heaven and earth, and whom he sent upon earth to execute judgment for the oppressed, to give food to the hungry, to loose the prisoners, to open the eyes of the blind, to raise them that were bowed down. (Verses 6, 7, 8, compared with various parts of the New Testament). Jesus is the only Mediator between God and man, and God alone has power to forgive sins. To Jesus was this power given while on earth (Matt. ix. 2-6); but to no other is it vouchsafed. Jesus came to do the Father's will, and finished on the cross the work of redemption. "His blood cleanseth from all sin." "There is no other name whereby we

must be saved." "He ever liveth as High Priest to make intercession for them who come unto God by him." O my soul! happy indeed are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the Lord their God, who revealed himself as the God of Israel in the Old Testament, and confirms himself as "God manifest in the flesh" in the New. Prophecies fulfilled, and promises ratified, testifying to the truth that Jesus was the promised "Light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel;" that he was the promised Messiah whom the carnal and blinded Jews rejected, but whose day Abraham saw afar off; that he was the promised "Child born, the Son given, whose name was called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace."

As Simeon, who was "waiting for the consolation of Israel," we are almost inclined to say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

Nov. 26.—*Above all things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.*—COL. iii. 14.

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time.

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."

There cannot be a more beautiful illustration of that "charity which is the bond of perfectness" to which Paul exhorts the brethren, than this of the beloved apostle who was favoured to lean on the bosom of his Lord. The love of God and the love of the brethren to one another are so beautifully blended by the apostle, that we feel startled at the divisions and animosities in the present time of those who profess to be born of God. We can only take one view, that the love of God is not perfected in the hearts of the regenerate: for as perfect love casteth out fear, so perfect love to God will bring forth the fruit of love to the brethren. The love of the regenerate to God is of the Spirit; but we look at one another in the flesh, and view old Adam nature rather than the new man in Christ Jesus. Thus we lack the bond of perfectness, and judge one another after the flesh, and not after the Spirit. We love God, because he first loved us. We love Jesus, who hath done such great things for our souls; but, if we love not a brother for Christ's sake, the love of God is not perfected in us.

Holy Spirit, it is thou that must revive us, and kindle in our hearts that holy love which is the bond of union without respect of persons or outward separation, and which loveth all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth.

Nov. 27.—*For they cried to God in the battle, and he was entreated of them, because they put their trust in him.*—1 CHRON. v. 20.

It is the battles of the people of God that produce the cry: when at ease the arms are laid down, and they

cry, "Peace, peace," Often, under temptations, there is no resistance, and the cry of "peace" should be "war;" but if the battle begin, the flesh and the devil resisted, yet felt too powerful to be overcome, then in the battle will they cry unto God; and will not the Lord be entreated of those who cry unto him now, as he was in times past? Will he not hear and help those who put their trust in him? If we battle with the enemies of the Lord, surely the Lord will be on our side; but if we compromise with, encourage and entertain those who could draw us aside from our allegiance to our rightful Sovereign, and we cry not unto him, will he not give us up to the hardness of our hearts, and cause us to feel the loss of the light of his countenance? Then "they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses." If there be a warfare between flesh and spirit felt and groaned under, the cry will be unto God, who is a God full of compassion and tender mercy. He will be entreated of those who put their trust in him. He will subdue the enemies, give strength to his people who call upon him, who battle in the name of the Lord. If we stand at ease, the enemies gain ground; if we strive in our own strength, we are overcome; if we fight with carnal weapons, we never gain a victory. Earthly friends cannot help us in a spiritual warfare; with a multitude of counsellors, there is not sufficient wisdom rightly to advise. The cry must be to God; the trust in him; deliverance comes from him, and the praise and the glory all, all be to him.

Nov. 28.—*But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*—PSALM cii. 27.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for

ever." Thus saith the apostle, confirming the Divinity of our Lord, that he was one with God, by whom he created the heavens and the earth. There is no study so beneficial to the soul, so confirming to the understanding, so strengthening to the faith, as that of comparing Scripture with Scripture, without the aid of man's comments and opinions. The soul drawn to the Bible by the Holy Spirit shall be instructed thereby, and with a single eye to the establishment of truth, shall assuredly be instructed therein. We write feelingly; we write experimentally! and if one subject excites our interest more than another, it is the Divinity of Jesus; and with a heart overflowing with gratitude, under deep humiliation of soul in reflecting on the past, we delight to meditate on those parts of Scripture which show us so plainly that Christ is God. The union of God and man is a mystery to be received by faith. But if Jesus be not one with God; if he did not raise the dead, open the eyes of the blind, heal the sick with a word, forgive sins, and work all things with the power of God; then the Scriptures are not true; and this appears to be more easily credited by the naturally infidel mind of man, than to profess a belief in the Scriptures, and reject the Godhead of Christ. If we believe in Jesus, we must believe his word as well as his deeds; and, if we believe these, we cannot but believe that the man Christ Jesus was "God manifest in the flesh," and from his own testimony that he was one with the Father. Without this belief there is no hope for a sinner who expects a day of judgment. If Jesus was only man born into the world after natural generation, he could not have been pure and undefiled; he must have partaken of the defilement of Adam's fallen posterity, and could

not have been a pure sacrifice to make atonement for sin ; and if there be no atonement, where can those look who have no good works to plead, but feel themselves corrupt and defiled from the "crown of the head to the soul of the foot?" Oh, the various delusions of men's minds ! And what must be the sentence of those who fearlessly enter the presence of God, standing in their own fancied righteousness, having spurned the Godhead of Jesus, and ridiculed his atonement, with the Scripture in their hand, professing to believe in ! My soul, draw a veil over these delusions, and bless thy God that thou art a "brand plucked from the burning;" that thine eyes have been opened to spiritual light, without which we walk in darkness as to the Spirit of Scripture, though there be a natural knowledge of the letter. "All things may perish ; but thou, O Lord, art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Jesus, by whom thou hast made all, and who is one with thee in eternal union, is the same for ever ; and the Spirit, the Comforter, which thou sent, and is to be with thy Church to the end of the world, and who savingly reveals Jesus unto the soul ; constitute the hope of the believer in electing love, redemption work, regenerating power.

To the Triune Jehovah, three persons in one undivided Essence, be glory and praise for ever.

Nov. 29.—*But let all those who put their trust in thee rejoice ; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them. Let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.*—PSALM v. 11.

The Psalmist so frequently breaks out in a holy rapture of praise to his God, with exhortations to his people to rejoice in him ; and the apostles again, in

that holy link of divine revelation, call upon the disciples of Jesus to *rejoice in him*, that we cannot but be surprised that any should consider it presumption for those who have been privileged "with the full assurance of understanding" to be rejoicing in the Lord alway, according to the injunction of the inspired writers. I believe that, did we truly trust the Lord, we should rejoice in him at all times. Did we really believe that he defended us, we should ever shout for joy; and did we unreservedly love his name with a perfect love, we should be alway joyful in him: but, as we have said respecting the love of God in our hearts, that it is not perfect; so of our faith; for, as perfect love casteth out fear, so perfect faith would rejoice in the Lord at all times, and fully trusting him, we should rejoice in him under all trials and tribulations, in dangers, persecutions, perils or wars, revilings or false accusations. *Believing* that the Lord defended us, we should shout for joy; and, did we perfectly love the Lord, we should "rejoice, and again rejoice," *in him*. The Lord seems to bestow upon the Church at the present time but a small measure of faith and love; for we know that every gift cometh from him. But it is an especial mercy to know that the salvation of the soul depends not on the exercise or the measure of faith and love; so that we can look off from every act of grace *in us* to what Jesus is *to us* and has completed *for us*. This is "rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh."

Nov. 30.—*Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice.*—
PSALM lv. 17.

The apostle Paul says, "Pray without ceasing;"

"in everything give thanks." And in truth the prayer of the Christian is not restricted to time or place. The renewed soul cannot be tied to stated times; it cries according to circumstances, and prays as the Spirit indites. Overtaken by a trial, involved in a moment of time in trouble, it will not wait for a prescribed time for prayer, by which David was influenced, being under the law; but we feel assured that the royal Psalmist was not bound to these periods for pouring out his soul to his God.

We cannot forbear quoting part of a sweet exposition of prayer by a modern poet:—

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.
Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near.

MONTGOMERY.

Every believer can understand this. At all times the heart, when in lively spiritual exercise, will be lifting itself to God; the soul will utter its inward cries, will be aspiring towards its treasure, and the thoughts brought in subjection to Jesus, though the knees are not bent, nor the body prostrate. The Christian cannot believe that God is nearer at one time than at another; for he is ever present. "He compasseth our path and our lying down, and is acquainted with all our ways." But the evening and the morning are peculiarly adapted to awaken the soul to a sense of its own helplessness, and that the body requires for its protection an eye that neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. When darkness gathers around us, and we are

about to lie down on our bed, from which we may never arise, anticipating the closing of our eyes in sleep, which may never be unclosed to see the light of day ; knowing that beasts of prey stalk abroad in the darkness to devour the unprotected and prosecute their dark deeds with instruments of sudden destruction ; that flames, by accident or design, break out in a moment, bringing a lingering death upon the unconscious sleeper when all attempts to escape are vain ; with the consciousness of all this, and numberless casualties that cannot be enumerated, will they whose hope is in the Lord close their eyes without commending themselves to the care of their heavenly Protector ? Alas ! there are times, we believe, when those who have the love of God in their hearts will close their eyes without considering the probable dangers by which they are surrounded. Yet the Lord remaineth the same ; his eye watches, his power restrains. He proves that our protection depends not on our prayers, and we are shown the hardness of our hearts. We awake in the morning, when the light again comes to cheer ; we have been preserved from all perils. We awake once more to the life of this world, revived, refreshed, with renewed vigour to pursue the occupations which the light of day brings with it. Shall the first thought be, "How shall we accomplish the daily avocations of this life ?" Should we not suppose that thankfulness to God would fill the soul for his protection during the hours of unconsciousness ; that a morning aspiration from the heart would go up to him on the instant the eyes opened to the light, and felt the privileges of preservation ? Is not the soul condemned under the feeling, that the eyes are often *closed, and opened in thoughtlessness of the great*

daughters and of the mighty protection? And when noon comes, where are our thoughts? Oh! if we are judged by our doings, or our thoughts, or our prayers, not one soul can be saved; condemnation comes upon us on every side, and we have but one refuge to flee unto—grace and mercy by Jesus Christ. While we believe there is no saving merit in doings or prayers, we do most fervently desire that prayerfulness, and watchfulness, and thankfulness, should fill our hearts, and that the love of God and the life of the Spirit should be more manifested among the brethren and in our own soul. We are coming to the conclusion of the year; we are arrived at the end of one period of man's computation of time. The Lord alone knoweth what is before us, either individually or nationally; but, if *He* be on our side, what have we to fear? If Jesus be ours, then all things are ours; and though we do greatly desire that thy Spirit may be poured out abundantly upon thine Israel to bring them up out of the dust, that they may be manifestly the city that cannot be hid; yet *thy* will be done, O Lord, on earth, and give us patience to run the race set before us; and not only at morning, noon, and night, but at all times help us to be "looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith," who is the all in all to his spiritual body, which is one with him and with the Father (John xvii. 21-23). "Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever," to him be praise. Amen.

DECEMBER.

DEC. 1.—*Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright. Praise the Lord with harp, sing unto him with psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.*—PSALM xxxiii. 1, 2, 3.

With the words of the rejoicing Psalmist we commence the first day of the last month of our "Meditations," and would that our hearts were in full tone with the Psalmist, so that every string of the mystical body did vibrate with the praises of the Lord; that the harp, the psaltery, the instrument of ten thousand times ten thousand strings, were all tuned in full harmony to sing unto him, rejoice in him, and send forth the praise which is comely for the upright, and sing unto him a new song, that heaven and earth might hear.

How did David's soul at various times break out in praises for deliverance from perils and victories over enemies! When discomfited and cast down, he prays; when victorious he praises; and are the deliverances and the victories less to the believer in Jesus? David's were temporal; the Christian's now are mostly spiritual, though David often had soul-conflicts too, and his soul was cast down and disquieted. Contemplate again, my soul, thy deliverances and victories by Jesus Christ; recount them over in thy mind; sum them up, if thou art able to enumerate the vast amount, and say if David had greater cause for rejoicing, and praise, and songs of thanksgiving than thou. Temporal deliverances and victories are only for time; spiritual are for eternity. The one

concerns the body, the other the soul. Israel fought for an earthly temple, David contended for his earthly crown ; but Jesus *hath* delivered from everlasting destruction, and obtained the victory for eternal glory. O my soul ! rejoice in the Lord, praise him with all thine heart ; sing unto him with all the powers of thy mind. Let every string be tuned to praise. Sing unto him the new song of the gospel by Jesus Christ ; play skilfully to Jesus alone, and be not ashamed to proclaim aloud that all thy glory is in him and his finished work of salvation.

Glory to his blessed name for ever and ever.

DEC. 2.—*And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu ? And he answered What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many ?—2 KINGS ix. 22.*

The Jewish history is full of interest, and full of lessons to the spiritual mind. There is a simplicity in the Scripture relation of facts, independent of their divine origin, which makes the relations ever new ; but when we come to the direct fulfilment of prophecy, we are led to say of a truth this must be from God. Such is the history of this miserable woman Jezebel ; the prophecy of Elijah the Tishbite was literally fulfilled. We see in this history the evil of unhallowed connexions. Ahab, an Israelite, professing the worship of the true God, the God of his fathers, took for a wife a daughter of the king of the Zidonians ; and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. Jezebel not only seduced her husband from the right way, the true worship, but caused him to persecute the true worshippers unto death ; and cherish and follow Baal's

priests, with all their abominations. And this was not all, her influence extended to her posterity (1 Kings xxi. 52, 53), and to the Kings of Judah (2 Kings viii. 18); for men "are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge," as the prophet said of Israel (Jer. iv. 22). The Lord works by evil men, whom he employs as scourges to his own people for their good, and as instruments of vengeance to the ungodly. Thus was Jehu employed; and his cutting reproof was followed by an instantaneous act, which brought the king of Israel to the dust, and he was cast into the portion of the field of Naboth, according to the word of the Lord (1 Kings xxi. 19-20). Nor could his mother Jezebel escape, for the Lord had spoken it (1 Kings xxi. 23); and Jehu fulfilled the prophecy—for the Lord sends his messages, and executes his judgments by whom and what he will. Many the lessons we learn from the character of Jehu; he performed mighty deeds on the Lord's side. "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord," he said; and he slew the worshippers of Baal, destroyed his house and images. "But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart; for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin." Do we not see God's sovereignty? He employs evil men to execute his purposes, and by their hands worketh good to his people. Are there no Jehus in this day? Are there not numbers who are showing their "zeal for the Lord," whose hearts are not with the Lord? Who are slaying the worshippers of Baal, yet bowing down to the "golden calves of the land?" Yet are these working for the good of the Church of Christ, though they be quite unconscious of it. And are there no Jezebels

alive? Consider the professing Church in all nations, and may we not in the words of Jehu say, "What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?" Can there be peace with such divisions? Peace, when error abounds, and the love of many is waxing cold? Peace, when the Christian's God and only Saviour is trampled upon, either wholly or in part, his Godhead denied, or his righteousness rejected? What peace, when the holy religion of Jesus is taken up as a cloak for earthly gain or self-glory? If there be outward peace for a time, it cannot be long. A Jehu may arise to slay Jezebel, and be the scourge in the hand of the Lord to those nations that blaspheme his name. And are there not Jezebels *within*? Are there not whoredoms and witchcrafts carried on in the heart? Is there not a warfare, a continual and mighty struggle, in the soul of the believer—and can there be peace? No, there can be no peace in self, no peace while flesh is alive, for the soul conscious of sin, until Jesus be revealed as an entire Saviour. But God, who is rich in mercy, speaks peace by his dear Son to the contrite heart made spiritually alive; and though a war exists between flesh and spirit, yet are we more than conquerors through him who loved us—"Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

DEC. 3.—*One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel. Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of Hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.*—ISAIAH xliv. 5, 6.

As it was in the days of the prophet, so was it in the days of the apostle, and so is it now. Paul appeals to the brethren, "I beseech you by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing; every one of you saith I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, I of Cephas, I of Christ. Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. i. 10-13). Such is man; ever going after idols; setting up the creature; idolizing man rather than worshipping God. The cry now is "Unity." And what is the unity men are striving for? Unity in non-essentials, in name, in mode of worship. They say they are Christians, yet call themselves by the name of their idols, either man or the temple. Could we recount the variety of divisions which at this time subsist, would they not fill pages of this little volume? But, my soul, "thus saith the Lord, I am the first, I am the last, and beside me there is no God." This is the unity we want. Follow Christ wholly, and we shall have unity. Unite with one heart to extol him only, we should have unity. But, no, unity is not for flesh and blood; but there is a spiritual union which cannot be broken. Christ and his members are one; and though the members be divided outwardly, yet are they still one in him: and while men are falsely seeking to establish unity in worship, do thou, my soul, more fervently look unto Jesus, and worship thy God in spirit and in truth. Vain are the efforts of

man to bind the soul; he may torture the body unto death, but he cannot cast the soul into hell, neither can he give it a passport to heaven. Thanks be to God, we are in his hands, and—

“Not a single shaft shall hit,
Till the God of love sees fit.”

To his care we trust, in his strength we move; and whether with life or death before us, we acknowledge no God but One, who is the first and the last; no Saviour but Jesus, whose blood cleanseth from all sin, whose purity giveth all righteousness; one Spirit, who only regenerates the soul, and without which no one can enter the kingdom of heaven. Jesus is our only Intercessor, through whom we come boldly to a throne of grace, and need not the intervention of dead men; whom we can approach in love, for he is the sinner's Friend, and called his disciples his brethren. Jesus is the only way, the only door, the only Shepherd of his sheep; the only Priest who abideth for ever, who is the ever living Head of his one body the Church, which he hath sanctified and purified for himself. Praise to the eternal Three in One.

DEC. 4.—*So David waxed greater and greater: for the Lord of hosts was with him.*—1 CHRON. xi. 9.

In contemplating the character of David, we can plainly see that the Lord of hosts was with him from the time he was called from the sheep-fold to be anointed by Samuel as the future king of Israel. The stripling's deed with the Philistine giant, the trials he endured, the persecutions of Saul, his forbearance towards this great enemy, his love for Jonathan, his lamentation over him and Saul at their death, which gave him possession of the crown of Israel; his ex-

giveness of those who cursed him, the rebellion of his darling son, the defection of his people, and his final establishment on the throne of Israel, make his history full of interest. His deliverances, his victories, prove that the Lord of hosts was with him, and thus he waxed greater and greater. David was the king appointed by the Lord ; Saul was a king desired by the people (Sam. viii. 7 ; Hos. xiii. 11 ; Acts xiii. 21, 22). David was a man after God's own heart ; he was the appointed progenitor of the Messiah ; and did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite (1 Kings xv. 5). David's character not only shows traits of man's greatness, but it exhibits human weakness ; and we are taught that perfection dwelleth not with fallen man. But let us view the sweet singer of Israel, and the king is hidden in the man of God. We see him first with his harp, soothing his persecutor Saul ; we come to the book of divine psalms, his penitence, his prayers, his praise, his heart-rending, his heart-rejoicing, what can surpass ! His whole soul is directed to his God ; his harp is tuned only to come before the Lord. We see the depth of humiliation, the height of exaltation, in his strains of praise to the God of Israel. The psalms embrace every experience to which the believer is subject ; they prophesy of Jesus, and speak, as it were, in his individual person. We trace David from watching the sheep and being brought before Samuel, "ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance ;" we travel with him in his varied trials, and come to his last days, his prayer as recorded in the last chapter of the 1st book of Chronicles, sheweth his self-rejection and divine fervour. He ascribes all the "*greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, the*

majesty, unto the Lord." "And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour."

DEC. 5.—*Draw me, we will run after thee.*—SONG I. 4.

As we must consider this Song of Solomon as typical of Christ and the Church, we see in these words a blessed confirmation of God's constraining power, *and yet* the freeness of the will; "draw me, we will run after thee." When the Lord draws, his service is no longer a duty-work, it is not compulsory, as the slave's obedience, from fear; but it is the delight of the heart to walk in the ways of the Lord; when he draws, he makes the soul willing to follow. He says of his people Israel by his prophet Hosea, "Behold, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." And a greater than Hosea, nay, than all the prophets and apostles, said, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me." The soul that is drawn to God by the Spirit, receiving the spirit of adoption, works by love, and is never satisfied unless the heart is exercised in the service of the Lord; the repetition of words, the form without the power, the lip-service, is no comfort to the renewed soul. The first drawings of the Lord the Spirit awaken to a feeling sense of sin; and when he speaks comfortably, who can describe the delight? The soul is *drawn*, but not *forced*; it runs with all the heart into the ways of the Lord; the things of earth which once engaged the thoughts and time no longer charm: old things pass away, the affections run into another channel, and eternity becomes more important than all that earth can bestow. Still the soul requires again and again being drawn by the Spirit's power to "run with patience the race set before us;" we relax

in zeal, become cold in feeling, and find the spirit willing but the flesh weak: yet do we look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. For amidst all our coldness, and barrenness, and infirmities of flesh, the soul runs unto Jesus; for whom he once draws, he will never forsake. Thus it is that the comfort of the regenerate depends on their apprehension of the Saviour; but their salvation rests with him entirely, if not, it is altogether precarious; if we are saved by our doings, "who then can be saved?" "All things are possible with God," but he has appointed the way, and is a God that changeth not. "No man can come unto the Son unless the Father draw him." When drawn, we run after Jesus as our only refuge, place of rest, anchor of hope, immovable rock, breast-plate of righteousness, shield of faith, and helmet of salvation. We believe by faith, we are comforted through faith, settled and established by faith; but are not *saved* by our faith. Without love, our faith, though it remove mountains, is nothing; we may give all our goods to feed the poor, and give our bodies to be burned, but without love it profiteth nothing (1 Cor. xiii.) Love to Jesus produces love to the brethren, to all who love him in sincerity, who are manifestly new creatures in Christ Jesus. To him who hath redeemed us, drawn us, keeps us, be praise for ever and ever.

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- . DEC. 6.—*I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker.*—ISA. li. 12.
- If we truly had the fear and love of God in our hearts, should we have the fear of man? Oh my soul,

how do we often tremble before our fellow-worm of the dust, fear his censure, or cringe for his approbation? And shall we fear the raging power that is now being brought more and more openly before the Lord's redeemed? Oh, let those that trust in the Lord fear not man, nor his revilings; "I, even I, am he that comforteth you." The Lord will perform his purposes, and who shall turn him; but he will not forsake his Zion. He will thoroughly purge his floor, and burn up the chaff; he will cleanse his sanctuaries, for judgment shall begin at the house of God. And where is the fury of the oppressor? It shall end in their own destruction; they must die—they are as grass—fear not thou the reproach of men—look unto the Lord thy Maker: forget not the marvellous things he hath done "in ancient days, in the generations of old." We may yet be called upon nationally to resist the "fury of the oppressor." The Lord must work for us, strengthen us for the battle, and uphold us by his power. "If the Lord be with us, who can be against us?" Yes, Lord, truly have we cause for deep humiliation, and we would be looking unto thee as the One alone who can help. If thou bring judgments on this sinful professedly Christian land, it is right and just; if thou avert, it is merciful—all shall work for good to thy Zion. In all things enable us to give thanks, to bless thee the giver of all good; to trust thee at all times; to praise thee for the salvation of our never-dying souls; and give us strength to be faithful to thee even unto death.

DEC. 7.—*Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*—Ps. cxxxiii. 1.
And how sad, O Lord, for thy people who profess

to follow thee, to be so divided by strifes and bitterness, instead of uniting with one another in love and good-will. Under the Jewish dispensation there was but one temple of worship, after Solomon had "built a house for the Lord," the materials for which David had prepared; and here the tribes of Israel assembled at the stated times to worship, and present their offerings; here only was it lawful for Israel to worship and to sacrifice. The sin of Jeroboam was that he set up golden calves in Dan and Bethel for the ten tribes, who revolted with him from their lawful king. When Solomon had finished the temple, the "ark of the Lord" was placed in the most holy place; "there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone" (1 Kings viii. 9). The manna which they loathed, and the priesthood which they rejected, were reserved for those who should believe (John vi. 32-35; Heb. vi. 20). The law written on tables of stone alone remained to Israel; by these they were condemned, but could not be saved—the law required continual sacrifice for sin (Heb. vii. 27, 28): the sinner requires a high priest that abideth for ever. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together, whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel to give thanks unto the name of the Lord." And to the temple did the tribes go at the time of the prescribed feasts, with one purpose, to worship one God; separated from all other nations, Israel was a chosen generation, a peculiar people, privileged in having direct revelation from the one only God; they were kept together by their law until "he should come whose right it was to reign," "a root of Jesse," "the bright and morning star," in whom there was to be neither Jew nor Gentile, but all one in him. But

though Judah was kept in outward unity, they were not all members of the invisible Church, the body of Christ, for whom the kingdom was prepared from the foundation of the world (Matt. xxv. 34; 2 Tim. i. 9); but as many as died in faith shall inherit the promises. In Christ Jesus all are one, united to him they are one body; and this spiritual union is the only union we can look at and rejoice in, for divisions are multiplied without, and we look in vain for outward unity among the brethren. But oh how sweet it is, how good and pleasant, to meet with even one with whom we have spiritual union, whose heart is fixed on the same object, whose treasure is in the same storehouse, who can leave the walls of the temple made with hands, and can unite "in spirit and in truth" to worship the Father through the Son, and love him in truth and sincerity. It is thy Spirit, O Lord, that must help our infirmities; it is thou that must unite us by one spirit upon earth, as thou hast united us eternally to thyself in the kingdom of heaven. When released from these bodies of sin, and raised glorious bodies over which the second death shall have no power, when "the Son of Man shall come with power and great glory, and by his angels shall gather together his elect from one end of heaven to the other," then shall there be perfect unity, then shall there be no separation, all united to the glorious Head for ever and ever. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen."

DEC. 8.—*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*—JOHN xiv. 6.

Blessed are they who are in the narrow way that leadeth to everlasting life. "Search the Scriptures,

for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me," saith Jesus to the unbelieving Jews. And let *us* search the Scriptures, and shall we not find that Jesus is the only way to the Father; the only way of salvation; the only way that leadeth not to destruction; "the highway of holiness, that the wayfaring man though a fool shall not err therein?" "Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." And not one would find it of themselves. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." Many there be who are deceiving themselves, climbing up some other way into the sheepfold; but Jesus is the only door by which any can enter in to be saved. "I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine." And it is an appalling truth to reflect upon, that many in the last day, who cry, "Lord, Lord," and plead their wonderful works, shall be rejected, and receive the awful sentence, "I never knew ye, depart from me." Jesus is the truth, and without abiding in him as the branch in the vine, we can neither bear fruit nor have eternal life. "Wherefore we are dead to the law by the body of Christ, united to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God, and serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." "Without me (saith Jesus) ye can do nothing." "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me," said one who had felt the power of what he affirmed, and was persuaded that Christ was all in all. We come again to the divine testimony of our Lord, "I am the resurrection and the life; I give unto my

sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish." What a blessed assertion ! and how fully did the apostle believe his Lord and Master. "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Then how can it be lost when there? Oh my soul, if aught depended on thy doings, thou couldst have no hope of eternal life. Truly is Jesus the way, the truth, and the life ; in him his sheep are secure, and only there. "All my springs are in thee;" "from thee is my fruit found." Oh trust not in anything short of Christ. The more thou lookest at him, the more thou wilt desire to be like him ; the greater thy love, the more fervent thy desire to be with him. To awake up in his likeness, to see him as he is, to be with him for ever, then will my soul be fully satisfied.

DEC. 9.—*And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.*—PSALM civ. 15.

We are constrained in these latter days to pass from the law to the gospel, to take the spiritual out of the literal, things of heaven from things of earth, and with the newness of the Spirit look at the oldness of the letter. This is the gospel-day privilege ; and our hearts must rejoice when we are able to behold the substance in the shadows of the old dispensation. Spiritual things are so continually illustrated by natural figures, that it cannot be straining Scripture to take these words in a spiritual sense as well as in the letter. The Lord God giveth all ; he created all, and is Lord over all in heaven and earth. When we meditate upon the "wine that maketh glad the heart of man," we cannot but look at something beyond the literal wine, which caused one of old to transgress, and often makes the hearts of many sad at this day. But we

look at the "fruit of the vine," the new wine of the gospel kingdom; that wine which was to be put into new bottles, and not into the old bottles of the law; the cup which Jesus drank, of which all his redeemed partake (Mark x. 39). This is the wine which maketh glad the heart of man; this is the wine which blot-teth out the curses of the law, and the condemnation for sin. "For this is my blood of the New Testa-ment which is shed for many, for the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28). And what is that unction from the Holy One which enlightens the counten-ance, and maketh the face to shine with the love of Jesus, which is shed abroad in the heart? It is that blessed softening power which cometh by the Spirit, the precious ointment, the dew of Hermon, which bringeth love, and meekness, and forbearance; which maketh the face to shine and the heart to rejoice, when two or three are gathered together in the name of the Lord; and then he has promised to bless, and that is by the Comforter. "The bread which strengtheneth man's heart." What bread is this, but that which came down from heaven; the bread of life, the spiritual manna, whosoever eateth of it shall never die. Blessed Jesus, thou hast procured all these blessings for thy people; thou art all to them, all in them—thou art wine to the weak, oil to the sick and wounded, and bread to the hungry; a well of water springing up into eternal life; the rock from whence living waters flow; the vine from which thy branches derive their sap and sup-port, and from whom their fruit is found. "Where-fore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead

that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. vii. 4).

DEC. 10.—*Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.*—LUKE x. 20.

Gifts may be given to those whose names are not written in heaven. Hence our Lord says, "Rejoice not in that the spirits are subject unto you." Judas had the power given with the other apostles, to cast out unclean spirits, to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers; but his name was not in the book of life. Therefore, rejoice not, though ye have all gifts—power to work miracles and utterance to preach "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The Lord effects his purposes by whom he will; but, though you have all gifts and all faith, rejoice not in them, but "rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." O my soul! what are all gifts, all knowledge, all wisdom, if thy name be not written in heaven? Those who have gifts have nothing to boast of; for all come from God. Those who have them not have nothing to regret, if they have a good hope through grace, that their names are in the Lamb's book of life. All of earth will soon vanish away to each individual upon it. An eternity lies before us. There is no hope in the grave. There is no intermediate state from which the mummery of masses or mockery of prayer can release the soul after it has left the body. What solemn questions are these! Is my name written in heaven? Has the blood of Jesus cleansed me from all sin? How important the things respecting eternity! How light the things of time in comparison! Jesus, thou art

all my hope and all my salvation. *Thou* art the Saviour, *not* thy commands nor thine ordinances. The name written in heaven from eternity (2 Tim. i. 9; Matt. xxv. 34), sealed by thy blood in time, can never be blotted out. In this we rejoice, that salvation depends not on ourselves, but is complete in Jesus, who saves to the uttermost all who come to God by him.

Glory to Father, Son, and Spirit, Three in one eternal Jehovah.

DEC. 11.—*And I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body. Fear him which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell.*—

LUKE xii. 4, 5.

We see from the first verse of this chapter the distinction our Lord makes between the multitude and his disciples. He speaks unto these; he calls them "my friends"; nor is he "ashamed to call them brethren." And can we not believe that Jesus still speaks to his disciples; that he continues to say, "My friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, but fear him, that hath power to cast into hell?" Do we not feel condemned, inasmuch as the fear of man is often far greater than the fear of God? Godly men have belied their conscience by the torture of the body. Many sin in the sight of God who would not have man to witness; many keep secret what they know of heavenly things from fear of an earthly creature; and many profess what they do not feel in the heart, from the same fear. O ye unbelieving, cowardly hearts, hear the voice of Jesus. "I say, my friends, be not afraid of man, he can only kill the body; but God can do more, he can cast both body and soul into hell."

But flesh looks more at present evil than future good, and would fain escape one and remain blind to the other. The trial we see before us is certain, from which we would escape; the future evil we are apt to look at as uncertain, from which we may escape. We look at God as all merciful, at man as all merciless; thus the flesh shrinks from a fellow-mortal in fear, while the soul looks to a God of mercy in hope. The tortures of the body, the agony of the mind, we can imagine, if we have not experienced them; the tortures of the never-dying worm we have no conception of. The Lord shows his people their weakness by leaving them to their own strength, and in their weakness he reveals to them *his* strength. Thyself, O Lord, must give the power to overcome, the strength to bear, the faith to believe, the heart to love, and the conscience to fear. Give us, O Lord, the godly fear of offending thee, the holy love to follow thee, the precious faith to believe thee, and the abiding peace which thou alone canst bestow.

DEC. 12.—*In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and his children shall have a place of refuge.*—Prov. xiv. 26.

There is a slavish fear which gendereth to bondage; there is a godly fear which is "a fountain of life;" there is a fear of God where there is no love; there is a perfect love which casteth out fear—that is, a slavish fear; but love will have a godly fear of offending, though it have no fear of perishing. This is the fear our Lord referred to in our last meditation; "Fear him who can cast into hell." Then this fear becomes "a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death." It is a fear which springs from the love of God—the

fear that has strong confidence. David says, "In his fear will I walk all the day long." The children are bound by love and withheld by fear, and have a place of refuge. O blessed resting-place! There is now but one city of refuge; they that run into it are safe, eternally safe. In the fear of the Lord, which is based upon the eternal love of God sealed upon the heart by the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, is strong confidence, which does truly become a fountain of life to depart from the snares which lead to death. It is sweet to reflect on that place of refuge which the Lord has prepared for them that love him; the hiding-place where those who *know* they are in may be confident they are safe, unless unbelief tells them to deny the "word of the Lord." There is no safety out of Jesus; in him is eternal security. There be many who walk without fear or love, whose confidence is in themselves; for those Jesus is no place of refuge. It is only for the children who are poor and needy; and these shall be brought to the banqueting-house, and have the banner of love over them. They shall come to the place of refuge for the destitute; their sorrow shall be turned into joy, and *that* joy no man shall take from them.

DEC. 13.—*Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, all is vanity.*—ECCLES. xii. 8.

"Vanity of vanities," responds my heart, "all is vanity." Most true that things of earth are all vanity; all subject to decay, perishing, unstable. The wise man had tried all things, and he concludes, as he began, this book of his latter days, "All is vanity." One generation passeth away after another. We have life and death continually before us; numbers coming

into the world, and numbers departing; changes for ever taking place. How uncertain all things here! Friends taken from us in a moment; the dearest tie snapped asunder which we were hugging to our bosom, as if we should keep it for ever. The world forsakes us, and friends grow cold; we tire and sicken at all around us; it is all vanity. What! all vanity? Is there nothing for the soul to be satisfied with? Is it all a blank, all uncertainty, all death? Is there nothing to make this world of sin and trial bearable—nothing to reconcile us to the life of this world? Oh! yes, yes; there is something in the present, something in the future that is not vanity. There is One above earth, One beyond time, where our souls can rest and feel it is not vanity. There is a life beyond the grave; there is one gone before who leads the way, who ever lives, that all who live in him may follow, and with him live for ever. This hope smoothes the rough path, quiets the turbulent spirit, gives peace in the midst of trouble, and whispers, "All is not vanity." There is something in reserve, laid up in store. This sweetens life when all things appear against us. Yes, there is ONE who changeth not; "who is faithful and true;" who abideth for ever; who is all perfect, all holy, all merciful, all just. Here we can look, can rest, and be satisfied; can trust, and not be afraid; in whom we glory, though we see that all of earth is "vanity of vanities."

DEC. 14.—*But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less the house which I have built.*—2 CHRON. vi. 18.

Solomon appears to be suddenly arrested with the

vastness of the thought of the Lord the God of Israel dwelling with man upon earth. It is not recorded whether Solomon saw the day of the Lord afar off; but I should think he did not see that God would be manifest in the flesh, and come to the second temple, which was far less magnificent than this which Solomon built. Solomon could see that the Lord God must occupy all space, and could not believe he could be confined to a house made with hands. He did not see that Deity would dwell in flesh, and sojourn with man in very deed on the earth. Wonderful mystery, gracious condescension, marvellous act, merciful loving-kindness, to restore fallen man, to draw sinners to God, to make reconciliation to himself! But to this temple did the Messiah come, the elect of God, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt, and yet a body for the suffering of death; Son of man, yet one with the Father; without sin, yet suffering for sin. What did Jesus say while upon earth? "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Yes, and while they were yet sinners, Christ died for them; God in this commending his love. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Rom. v. 7-10). O my soul! meditate over this, that God in very deed has dwelt upon earth; that his glory filled the temple, but not the glory manifest to the eye of nature. The eye of faith sees a glory surpassing all that the natural mind can picture--the glory of meekness, humility, and suffering, shine forth in the Friend of sinners and Saviour of his people; the glory of the gospel of peace, by which the law is magnified and its terrors quenched. God has dwelt on

earth veiled in humanity, so that man could look and live. O Lord! great is the mystery of godliness. We see by faith, yet still darkly; ; but enough to praise the holy name, to discern good from evil, and see that which serveth God, and that which serveth him not; and that by Jesus alone can we come to that holy temple "not made with hands," but the which is "eternal in the heavens."

DEC. 15.—*The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.*—LAM. iii. 24.

To the soul that has been spiritually taught what sin is, can there be a more blessed exercise of faith than this? To have the eyes of the understanding opened; a spiritual knowledge of ourselves; a revelation of the sins of the heart, which are all manifest in his sight who searcheth all, though they be hidden from man and often from ourselves; will bring condemnation very distinct from that of the natural conscience. For the broken heart and the contrite spirit there is no peace, until we can realize, "The Lord is my portion;" and when this blessed application is wrought in the soul; when the blood of Jesus is sprinkled upon the guilty conscience; when the circumcised, the spiritual ear heareth the voice of peace, saying, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" when the blind eyes are unclosed to see Jesus, the Prince of peace, intercepting and interceding between the guilty soul and the justice of God, which is a consuming fire; then can it say, "Therefore, will I hope in him." The Levites had no inheritance among their brethren, the Lord was their inheritance and their portion; neither has the Church of Christ any lot or portion in the world, which lieth in wickedness. The Lord is their portion

from everlasting; but they know it not until the Spirit reveals it. But to realize that "the Lord is my portion," then the only hope—all the hope—is in him. What do we want of earth, of the world, of its devotees; what of the world's portion, its pleasures, its joys? Ah! here is the broad road to destruction, the end whereof is eternal death, "The Lord thy portion," my soul, is eternal life; and truly dost thou say, "All my hope is in him." Jesus, the Mediator, the Saviour of his people, to whom with the Father and the Spirit, one eternal God, be eternal praise for sovereign grace.

DEC. 16.—*For she said within herself, if I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.*—MATT. ix. 21.

Oh that blessed first touch of faith! Continue thy last meditations, my soul; it is a subject full of interest, of eternal importance. What are the diseases of the body compared with the loss of the soul? And shall a poor diseased woman press towards Jesus to be healed; shall she in faith say, "If I touch but the hem of his garment, I shall be whole;" and shall she be rejected? Will the soul that feels there is no soundness in any part; that sin is in all its members, and that God has not been in all its thoughts; shall such a one not press toward Jesus? Will it not cry for mercy? Will it not strive to touch the hem of the garment of Him who hath virtue sufficient to heal all diseases? Yes, these are they who press towards him; these are they in whose souls the Spirit is working. They feel the plague of sin, and are taught that One alone can heal. In vain do they strive to heal themselves, to bring peace by their own fleshly sacrifices and duty offerings. These may satisfy nature,

gratify pride, and quiet the conscience : but they will not satisfy the Spirit. Where the Spirit works, there is no peace until Jesus is seen and touched ; until self is renounced, and Jesus beheld as all our "portion" and all our "hope." Blessed be God ! the work begun shall be carried on ; faith shall touch the hem of the garment, and Jesus will not leave the soul comfortless that comes unto him. The contrite heart he will not spurn ; the bruised reed he will not break. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Nature strives and labours, and binds heavy burdens upon itself (after the law dispensation, which Jesus hath put away), and with it nature is well pleased. Not so where sin is revealed by the Spirit, which must show Jesus before there can be peace ; and the peace which the Spirit of God gives, none can take away. When the soul feels the healing power of the blood which cleanseth from all sin, there is peace, and faith's first touch is a joy the unrenewed soul cannot intermeddle with. "Daughter, be of good cheer ; thy faith hath made thee whole." Oh, then, what cause for joy, if Jesus has cleansed the guilty soul and saved it from eternal death. I would, O Lord, bless and praise thee continually ; but this can only be when we awake up in thine own likeness ; when we are changed from corruption to incorruption.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought ;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

NEWTON.

DEC. 17.—*There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto Israel: all came to pass.*—JOSHUA xxi. 45.

O my soul! that faith could ever behold the Lord working in all things for thy good; that all he purposes shall come to pass; and all that comes to pass is according to his purpose; but in the face of past mercies and wondrous deliverances, what unbelief fills the mind! The Lord gave unto Israel the land he swore to give unto their fathers; he gave them rest, and delivered them from their enemies. Nothing failed, all came to pass; yet they again and again fell into unbelief. And so it is with our frail nature still; we cannot trust the Lord when we can put our trust in our fellow-man. We see recorded the dealings of Jehovah with his ancient people; all came to pass, and all has come to pass concerning them; yet we appear scarcely to believe that the same God is ours, scarcely to believe or to trust beyond the salvation of the soul. Our burdens, our temporal trials, we take upon ourselves, as if we had no God who said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you." The hairs of your head are all numbered. The little sparrows are not forgotten by God, and he saith, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." He clothes the lilies of the field, and "shall he not clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Oh, where is our faith? Is the word of the Lord believed? How do we trust his word? Lord, we are impotent in ourselves, and have no power to give faith to our unbelieving hearts. The work begun by thee must be carried on by thee; from thee cometh every good and perfect gift. But, my soul, thou dost believe that all shall come to pass which the Lord has pur-

posed, and no *good* thing will he withhold from his own who put their trust in him. "Lord, increase our faith," and "help thou mine unbelief."

DEC. 18.—*They shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides and thorns in your eyes.*—
JOSHUA xxiii. 13.

We are led to pursue Israel's history under Joshua a little further. Their leader is about to be gathered unto his fathers, and he admonishes Israel before he goes "the way of all the earth." He most solemnly abjures them to cleave unto the Lord, and not to make affinity with the nations who bow to gods that are no gods; not in anywise to go back and cleave to those heathen nations which the Lord had driven out for their sakes; not to intermarry with them to learn their ways. "Know ye for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive them out; but they shall be snares and traps, scourges in your sides and thorns in your eyes." And this was fulfilled in the course of time. They forsook the Lord their God, and served the gods of the heathen; and so they perished from off the "good land the Lord their God had given them." So it is with the people of God now, if they set up idols in their hearts; if they follow, and serve, and bow down to any but Him who requireth all the heart, for a certainty they shall be scourges and thorns; or if ye make affinity with those who know not your God, who serve not, and love not your Lord, they shall be traps and snares unto you. The sin brings its own punishment: but the standing of the Christian is—thanks be to God—upon surer grounds than was the promised land to Israel. They held that conditionally; but the eternal inheritance is held by

Jesus, secured in him, and is sure to all the seed. "Nevertheless, the son who transgresseth shall bear the reproach of his sin." The idol of his heart shall pierce him through; the false gods whom he serves shall not be able to deliver; they shall be scourges in his sides and thorns in his eyes. "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God." In the words of the aged apostle, who had been privileged to lean on the bosom of his Lord, I will conclude this meditation. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." Amen.

DEC. 19.—*All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.*—PSALM cxlv. 10, 11.

All things in creation speak the praises of the Lord, from the minutest to the greatest of the works of his hands; harmony and beauty are evident in all. Animate and inanimate beings are all adapted to the place assigned them by Him who by "wisdom made them all." Perfection as to formation is in every blade, every leaf, every fibre. The mite, as well as the elephant, has its several parts, juices, and functions adapted to the tiny sphere in which it moves. All show forth the praises of the Lord. Who could create such wonders, but God alone? How can they be viewed with an eye of indifference? Yet thus it is; they pass unnoticed, because creation is filled with these wonders, and many are daily in our sight. Are we not ourselves fearfully and wonderfully made? We use our limbs, our senses, our faculties; but who reflects on him who formed them? Who observes the marvellous structure of their own bodies to praise the Lord

thereby ? Alas, man is for the most part senseless to the works of the wonder-working God ! Nevertheless "all thy works praise thee, O Lord ;" and assuredly "thy saints shall bless thee:" bless thee for what thou hast done for their souls, though they remain blind to the wonders of the body. To speak of the glory of thy kingdom might well employ their tongues ; to talk of thy power would be an endless theme for all the faculties which thou hast bestowed. Surely they can speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power, to show forth thy praise ; though to comprehend the extent of either can never be attained by mortal, and the utmost stretch of man's imagination must fail. It is enough to know that Jesus is gone to prepare a place, that where he is, there will those who love him be ; and eye hath not seen, nor the heart of man conceived, the glory that shall be revealed to them. The power of God is without limit, we see it in these works that praise him, in those who bless him. Where can we go that his power is not visible ? and where can we flee from it, if we would ? His power in creation is visible, his power in redemption is felt and not seen ; the glory of thy kingdom shall crown thy power, and thy power shall be made manifest in the glory of thy kingdom. O Lord, how high, how vast, how far surpassing all the mind can grasp, are all things connected with thy power and thy glory ; we can speak of them, but cannot comprehend, "for the half of it cannot be told." But let us bless thee, O Lord, for what we do know, and glory alone in thee and thy power ; and blessed be thy glorious name for ever and ever.

DEC. 20.—*Also I set watchmen over them, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.*—JER. vi. 17.

In tracing the history of Israel, we cannot but observe that the nature of man is the same now as then; and the prophet Jeremiah appears to speak in my ear unto this guilty, this professing Christian nation. What is the state of our country? What are those who call themselves Christians? What the doctrine and practice of the so-called (man-made distinction) church and chapel? Blessed be God, Christianity has been the means of civilizing barbarous nations; and making, as it were, of ravenous beasts, domestic animals; our own land has been brought out of gross darkness, and we praise the Lord for it; but reflecting on its privileges, and its national profession of the holy religion of Jesus, we see "the sin of Judah written with a pen of iron, with a point of a diamond." Go ye from the throne to the cottage, from the statesman to the peasant, and where shall we find the lowliness, the meakness of Christianity; where the non-conformity to the world, its pomps and vanities, its customs and its sins? May we not with the prophet justly say, "for every one from the least even unto the greatest, is given to covetousness; from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely?" Doth it not sound in mine ear, "Shall I not visit them for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" Oh Judah, Judah, destruction shall begin at the house of God; ye have polluted my sanctuaries, ye profane my temples, ye worship idols, ye are gone from "the faith once delivered to the saints," and have set up images, the works of your own hands. The wild boar of the

forest shall tear and destroy, the wolf in sheep's clothing is at the door, the abomination of desolation shall be set up in the land, and millions will bow down to the "beast." When you are fully ripe, your captivity shall come, and gross darkness shall enthrall you; the snare is laid, and you see it not; the wily serpent is coiled beneath a covering, which the eye cannot penetrate, and where we least expected to find it; and secretly is the poisonous venom put forth, and many shall be the victims of its deadly sting. This master-piece of delusion, and Satan's mockery of our holy faith, is extending its borders, and spreading its nets far and wide—for the iniquity of the land, for the pollution of my name, shall it be—the scourge shall come, though ye cry "Peace, peace," but behold sudden destruction.

The Lord God omnipotent reigneth! Here we rest. He is over all; he will bring to pass all his purposes; the powers of darkness can go no farther than he wills. Man by nature is alienated from the life of God in the soul. In vain do the watchmen whom the Lord hath set, cry, "Hearken to the sound of the trumpet;" ye say, "We will not hearken." Ye credit the false prophets; "but when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall it be known that the Lord hath truly sent him."

DEC. 21.—*Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.*—PSALM xxxiv. 19.

"It is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God," the disciples of Jesus taught in early days. It is a truth, that many are the afflictions of the righteous, the redeemed of the Lord; and it is

a cheering promise for the Church to apply unto herself, that the Lord will deliver them out of all, and we may say he doth deliver : for from all the afflictions of this life death will mercifully deliver at the last, and the righteous soul will realize how far better to depart and be with Christ. But we must look beyond the members, to the Head of the Church, and we shall see something which points to Jesus in these words, "The Lord delivereth *him* out of them all." The justified members are only righteous in the Head, and Jesus is "*the righteous.*" "Were any sorrows like his sorrows?" "Many were his afflictions; "all thy waves are gone over me." No mortal can estimate the afflictions of Jesus, the weight of sins imputed to him; for "he bare the sins of many in his own body on the tree" mere humanity must have sunk under. Jesus freely laid down his life, bearing the cross and enduring the shame; "but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Triumphantly he rises, and now ever liveth at the right hand of God. The 20th verse confirms the prophetic spirit of the Psalmist, "He kept all his bones, not one of them is broken" (see John xix. 36). As the Lord has delivered *him* from all his afflictions, so have the members been delivered from the bondage state of this world; and when all are reunited to the Head, then shall the saying be fully brought to pass, "death is swallowed up in victory." There shall be no more going out; death and hell shall be subdued for ever: "they shall be cast into the lake of fire," with all who are "not found written in the book of life." "Salvation, and honour, and glory, and praise, unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments."

DEC. 22.—*But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear.*—2 SAM. xxiii. 6, 7.

Many deny the total depravity of man, and the sovereignty of the Almighty in his right to choose part of mankind to eternal life, and to leave the rest; "Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them."

Could David mean that the sons of Belial could not be taken in the body with hands? David's victories had been too many over the followers of false gods, to suppose this. No man can take them, no human power can soften the hard heart, or subdue the natural mind, to bring it to worship God in spirit and in truth. The sons of Belial, with the withered branches, shall be as thorns thrust away, they cannot be taken with hands, but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and that man "shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps. ii. 8, 9). Not even the Lord's own has man the power of touching the heart, for they are dead in trespasses and sins, and sunk in nature's darkness even as others; the Spirit of the Lord alone can effect this. Man delivers the message, sounds the gospel trumpet; but until the Spirit applies, the heart is untouched. All shall hear whom the Lord shall choose; but the sons of Belial will never hear the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so sweetly. It is the power of God which is manifest in all; "power to create, and power to destroy;" power to give life, and power to leave for the second death; power to raise from the dust, and power to

crush ; power to make whole, and power to break in pieces. O God the Lord, in whom is all my hope and trust, I bow to thy sovereign power in heaven and earth. Thou rulest over all, turning the hearts of men as thou wilt. The righteous shall praise thee, and the sons of Belial shall own thy power, and that thou art just in all thy ways.

DEC. 23.—*There be many that say, Who will show us any good ?—PSALM iv. 6.*

“ Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.” This is the greatest good thou canst show us ; this is the chief good—the everlasting good. “ In the light of thy countenance is favour, and in thy favour is life for evermore.” To walk in the light of his countenance, we must behold the Father in the face of Jesus Christ the Son. To have the light of his countenance, is to be “ brought out of darkness into marvellous light.” Who *can* show us any good but the Lord only ? “ Every good and perfect gift must come from thee ;” for with thee is the fountain of life, in thy light shall we see light. Jesus said, “ I am the light of the world ; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” If then the Lord lift up his countenance upon us, we possess all things—all is ours, for Christ is ours. There be many that say, “ Where is the promise of his coming ?” Yet come he will in a day and hour that we know not ; then woe unto you upon whom the Lord has not lifted the light of his countenance ; who are walking in darkness, rejecting the light. Many there be who say, “ we see,” and think all blind but themselves, and those who follow with them. Nature has the benefit of creating light and provi-

dential protection; but saving light is only from the special light of the Lord's countenance, transmitted by his Holy Spirit. Many renewed souls often lose the light of the Lord's countenance in experience; then they cry, "Who will show us any good?" They feel there is no good but what the Lord bestows—no good when the Lord hides himself; but this very hiding is for good, the Lord proves his children, and exercises their faith thereby. Art thou so exercised, my soul? Wait on the Lord, he will again lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and thou shalt live to praise him for all his dealings with thee, whether by darkness or light, sickness or health, sorrow or joy. "All things shall work together for good to those who love the Lord."

DEC. 24.—*That the Lord thy God may show us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.*—JER. xlii. 3.

The deceitfulness of man's heart is extreme, his self-will ungovernable, and his rebellion to God's holy way continually manifested by history and experience. Jeremiah is instructed by the people of Israel to pray unto the Lord for them; "Whether it be good or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee." The Lord said, ye shall not go into Egypt; yet hear what is said to the prophet after he had delivered the Lord's message, "Thou speakest falsely, the Lord our God has not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt." "So they came into the land of Egypt, for they obeyed not the voice of the Lord." Oh my soul, what hypocrisy it is to ask counsel of the Lord, and then take thine own way. But is it not the way of man? he promises but per-

forms not; he says, "ask the Lord," and then follows the devices of his own heart. The Lord helping us, we will advance into the latter day—this generation—the gospel day, and see what the Lord our God will show us there. With Israel we cannot rest; under the law we have no firm standing; it is a sandy foundation, which was to be done away when the glory which surpasseth was revealed; when the Church was to be built upon the Rock, "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Now the "Lord our God hath shown us plainly the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do." There is but one way, the narrow way; one answer to the cry, "What shall I do to be saved?" "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," who is the only way to be reconciled to God. We dare not vow, but look unto the Lord to give us strength to run the race set before us. We know something of the deceitfulness of our heart, and the insufficiency of ourselves to do anything as of ourselves. But the heart cries, Lord, help us, guide us, instruct, direct—tell us where to go—when to stand still—when to move; in all our ways direct our paths; let thy will be done; keep us from rebellion for Christ's sake, who hath done all completely and eternally for the salvation of the soul. Let the love of Christ constrain us, the law of love bind us, for the yoke of Jesus is easy and his burden light.

DEC. 25.—*I am sought of them that asked not for me: I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.*—ISAIAH LXV. 1.

In Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Gentile, all

are one in him. Oh that our hearts could sufficiently praise him for the merciful dispensation we are now under—the law of love, of peace, and reconciliation ! Jesus has destroyed the wall of partition, and the Gentiles have found mercy which they sought not. Behold me, saith the Lord ; Israel hath rejected me, and behold I graft the Gentiles into the living vine. This prophecy was fulfilled in due time ; the Jews rejected the Messiah, nothing human could convince their hardened hearts—the word of God was spoken to them, but they put it from them ; lo, we turn to the Gentiles. “ And when the Gentiles heard this they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord ; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” (Acts xiii. 46-48). “ Found of them that sought me not.” Is not this verified individually ? Does not the Lord “ seek his sheep and search them out.” Many are arrested who are not seeking, and before they are aware the Lord says, “ Behold me ! ” Some seek long before the Lord reveals himself—all according to his good pleasure. Some have their eyes opened suddenly, others sit by the way side begging, crying for mercy before the Lord calleth them. But all shall be called in, not a grain fall to the ground ; out of all nations the Lord has a seed to serve him ; they shall show forth thy praise, they shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them. They that sat in darkness shall come to the light, and behold him who hath redeemed them ; they shall behold thy glory, and sit down with thee in thy kingdom.

DEC. 26.—*Stand fast therefore in the liberty where-with Christ hath made us free.*—GAL. v. 1.

Not the liberty of licentiousness, as some do slan-

derously report and affirm, of those who have been graciously delivered from the entanglement of the law yoke of bondage. Those who are delivered from the condemnation of sin, and the curse of the law, are not at liberty to sin as they list, nor will a gracious soul say, "Let us sin that grace may abound." Paul is here speaking of the Jewish law, some parts of which the Jewish converts were desirous of retaining, and binding themselves with a yoke from which Christ had made them free; and not only retain it themselves, but desired to bind it upon the Gentile converts, who had never been under the Jewish law. The apostle exhorts them to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free;" not to sew a new piece on an old garment, nor put the new gospel wine into the old bottles of the law: "For I testify again to every one that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." Oh ye Christianised law-workers, think not that your keepingsome of God's commandments will suffice; if ye bind the yoke around your neck, seek to be justified by the deeds of the law, ye must perform every jot and tittle—then let conscience speak, and will it not condemn? But many renewed souls are making the law a *rule* for the walk of the Christian. "Tell me ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" Paul then describes the allegory of the two covenants—this Agar is mount Sinai, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children; "but Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." These are the children of the promise, which was before the law. The children of the bondwoman are born after the flesh—the law of a carnal commandment—which, being a shadow, could not make the

comers thereunto perfect ; but the children of the free woman are born after the promise, and are the children of Abraham through faith. They have a High Priest made after the power of an endless life. Moses and the law are dead (Rom. vii. 6) ; but the Son liveth for ever, and whomsoever he makes free are free indeed ; and the Lord's freemen are under the law of love, and not the law of bondage ; free from the law of works, the law of servitude, and under the law of faith and the willing service of a son. " Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Heed not, my soul, the false teachers and preachers of the present day. To the word of inspiration—it is not a sealed book to those whose eyes have been opened to a spiritual understanding ; and herein are the words of eternal life. " Dost thou believe in the Son of God ? " said Jesus to the man born blind, to whom he had given sight. " Who is he Lord, that I might believe on him ? " " It is he which talketh with thee." Canst thou not, my soul, fancy the delight of the restored man when he simply exclaims, " Lord, I believe ? " Belief was followed by act. " And he worshipped him." He had been cast out of the synagogue by the unbelieving Jews ; but Jesus found him, and he was translated from the darkness of the law to the glorious light of the gospel, the glorious liberty of the sons of God. " Stand fast in the liberty whereby Christ hath made us free." " If the Son make you free, then are ye free indeed."

DEC. 27.—*Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.*
PSALM cxlix. 1.

As this inspired book of heavenly songs draws to

a conclusion, how full of praise is it ! My soul feels that I also am drawing to the conclusion of these "MEDITATIONS." What would my soul be filled with ? Should I hang my head as the bulrush, and in mock humility say, "I am not worthy of the great salvation ?" Should I go mourning all the day long, because I do not the things I would and do that which I would not ? "Lord, if thou givest joy, who can give sorrow ?" If thou givest praise, neither the tongue nor the pen shall be restrained. There is not one upon earth worthy of salvation. It is a precious truth that Jesus receiveth sinners ; and, as such, we must come to him to be healed. Perfection is not for this time-state. My soul doth glory that our perfection is in Jesus, and gives him all the praise. We sing unto him the new song of gospel peace, glad tidings, good-will towards men ; the new song of salvation by grace, and not by the deeds of the law, "by which no flesh living shall be justified." We sing the new song of gospel liberty, being released from the yoke of bondage. We would sound the praise of Jesus in the congregation of saints, in that he hath redeemed us from the pit of corruption, and cleansed us from all sin in the sight of the Father, by his own most precious blood. Praise him, that he hath given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, feet to the lame, life to the dead. Praise him, that he hath brought in an everlasting righteousness and secured eternal glory for all his redeemed. "Praise God in his sanctuary, into which the righteous run, and are safe." Jesus, the living temple (John ii, 19-21). "Praise him in the firmament of his power." "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen. And have the keys of hell and of

death." Hallelujah. "Praise him for his mighty acts; praise him according to his excellent greatness." Oh, that every string of his redeemed was tuned to praise the Lord. "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord."

DEC. 28.—*But the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*—GAL. iv. 26.

The eyes of nature rest in time. Men view the beginning and the end by dates and eras, and compute time from seconds to years by the regular course of the planets. But when we look above this earth, and meditate upon the Lord of all, time is lost. There is neither beginning nor end with the Most High. The Jerusalem which was on earth had its beginning in time; but the Jerusalem which is above has no date by the records of man, and we are compelled to trace the purposes of God from everlasting. The Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of all the redeemed, originates in the eternal love of God. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." "Blessed be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." These are Scripture testimonies from the many that might be given. All the events of time are for the development of God's eternal purposes; and when, by faith's eye, we see and believe this, the mind is set at rest, and murmurings, rebellions, and cavillings, are stopped; but if we view events as happening by chance or according to our own arrangements, anxiety and discontent will assuredly follow. We are apt to view the Lord as "such a one as ourselves," and judge of things by our own finite minds.

We would order events in accordance with our own desires, and fret and are dismayed when disappointment is our portion, accusing ourselves or our fellow-mortal for the failure of our schemes. O blind mortality! O unbelieving soul! slow of heart to believe what thou canst not comprehend. Thus thou wilt not look beyond time, because thou canst not see all the links that form the chain of eternity. This is not for thee to behold; but the Jerusalem which is above; that the purposes of God are eternal; "that he is of one mind, and who can turn him," are clearly seen by the eye of faith. All things are progressing in their appointed order. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," is the sum and substance of all. He is the sun, the light, the centre, the beginning and the end, the first and the last of the New Jerusalem. "Here is no temple; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." "And the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." This is the free Jerusalem, free grace, free love, free salvation, "without money or without price," free pardon. "Grace, grace unto it." Ye have left the old Jerusalem of bondage, and are come unto Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the general assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in heaven, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the "new covenant" (Heb. xii. 22-24).

DEC. 29.—*Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*—LUKE xiii. 24.

"Lord, are there few that be saved?" was the question of one to whom our Lord gave this reply. It

is not for man to know whether there be few or many, and the vain curiosity of the inquirer seems to be reproved by the answer of Jesus. Question not about the number to be saved, but strive to enter in thyself at the strait gate; "for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; but broad is the road that leadeth to destruction." These are the words of Jesus, that many shall seek and not enter in, because they seek not to enter by the strait gate and narrow way. Man by nature seeks to enter in by his own way, but those who find the strait gate and narrow way are those whom the Lord seeks. The natural man will never find it; he seeks to enter in by that way which is pleasing to the flesh, easy to be attained, but gets not out of the broad road. O my soul! How many seek who will never find. The gate is too strait, the way too narrow for man to find by his own endeavours; he seeks to enter in, and satisfies conscience by his own endeavours, and lulls himself in the arms of a false peace. By nature, man is blind to spiritual things. The Spirit of God alone can unclothe the eyes to behold the narrow way. There must be a "NEW BIRTH." This is one of the Lord's spiritual secrets, which nature cannot understand, and no man can regenerate himself. This is the exclusive office of the Holy Spirit, and without this no man can enter the kingdom of heaven. This is the strait gate, and Jesus is the only way; there is no other. The Jews saw the miracles, but few believed on him who worked them, to the saving of their souls. The way was too narrow for the self-righteous Pharisees, thanking God they were not as

other men ; all proving that none " can come to Jesus unless the Father draw them." When the Spirit convinces of sin, there is a striving after Jesus, who is then revealed as the only way. The sick soul will press after him, the whole need not a physician ; nor is there any peace or healing until the garment is touched, the balm applied, and the still small voice is heard, " Thy sins are forgiven ; go in peace." Every way in the broad road may be tried, but there is no peace, no rest for the sin-sick soul until the narrow way is entered. The self-seeker is self-satisfied ; but the broken-hearted—those whom the Lord calls—can only be satisfied with Jesus. All besides are " physicians of no value ;" and the sensibly-pardoned sinner glories in giving him all the praise.

DEC. 30.—*Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*—EPH. vi. 23, 24.

What can be added to the words of the apostle to make them more weighty ? Nothing. Unless the Spirit apply whatever is written in the inspired word of God, or may be written therefrom, there is neither power, unction, nor profit.

The Lord will bless his own word as he pleases and to whom he pleases. One reads with coldness and indifference what may fill the whole soul of another with joy and praise. One will read and profit by what another will condemn. One sees truth in what another calls false. One reads for instruction, another to cavil ; so varied are the minds of men, unless led by the same Spirit. Brethren in Christ, ye have obtained peace by the blood of Jesus ; ye have the ever-

lasting love of God, and faith bestowed to lay hold on the hope set before you. The high privileges of salvation are revealed to us by the word and the Spirit, and the new commandment is to love one another. Oh, that peace dwelt among us, and love with faith indeed; but where is the spirit of love and peace among the brethren? We judge after the flesh, and are carnal—in the spirit of rancour, and not in meekness—the spirit of pride, and not in humility—in the spirit of the old man Adam, and not of the new man in Christ. “For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” We profess to love the Lord Jesus in sincerity; but do we love one another for *his* sake? Are we not, rather, partial? Judge your own selves. The Lord help us to look more at the inward grace than at the outward form or mode of worship. Here is the great stumbling-block. The disciples of Jesus said, “Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. Jesus said, Forbid him not; for he that is not against us is for us.” My soul, what is the conclusion of the matter? That imperfection is stamped upon all flesh. When we look there, all is gloomy and unsatisfying; but lift thy soul above that which must return to dust. Look unto Jesus and the never-dying soul, which he has, by free and sovereign grace, redeemed. Rejoice in him; leave all things with him; glorify him; praise him; and most heartily doth my soul conclude this “Meditation” with “Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Now, unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

DEC. 31.—*And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*—1 PETER v. 4.

The last of the month, the last day of the year, and it might possibly be the last day of thy mortal life. Look at the portion of Scripture with which thou hast to conclude this portion of time.

This little volume was begun with a "Meditation" on the great Jehovah in his essential Deity, whom no mortal can approach unto and live; but now we behold the way of access, the way of reconciliation to the one only God, who is infinite in holiness. We are brought to the Mediator of a better covenant than the law given by Moses; we are come to the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ (John i. 17), the Ratifier of the everlasting covenant, "ordered in all things and sure." We are brought also to look for the "chief Shepherd's" re-appearing, when you (Who? Canst thou, my soul, make self-application?); when you shall receive a "crown of glory which fadeth not away." Oh, canst thou realize that this blessing is for thee? What are fading earthly crowns—what all the fading things of earth, compared with this unfading crown of glory? What are all the trials and tribulations of this vain world, when, with the eye of faith, we can look within the vail, and realize Jesus as *ours* (and with him we possess all things—1 Cor. iii. 21-23), our Fore-runner, who is for ever entered in, that all his sheep may follow and have eternal life (John x. 26-28). We have a precious admonition, a blessed assertion from our brother Peter under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." Oh that faith could continually

cast all care upon One who is ready to hear and willing to succour—One who “careth for you.” Beware of the adversary; resist him steadfast in the faith; for he ever walketh about like a roaring “lion, seeking whom he may devour;” but the Lord “careth for you,” and in the strength of Jesus we shall be more than conquerors. Cheer up, my soul; thy “chief Shepherd” shall appear in due time, when all thine enemies and his enemies shall be seen no more for ever. Behold thy crown; faint not at thy trials; thy brethren who have departed in the faith have had the same path.

“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” Look, then, my soul, to Him who alone can do all for thee and in thee. End the month, the year, yea, every year of thy life (if years be spared to thee), nay, every day—with praises to the Lamb of God, the Saviour of sinners, “the Shepherd of his sheep,” who “is faithful and true,” and will never leave nor forsake those for whom he has shed his precious blood, who “shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away.” Hallelujah! “To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” Hallelujah!

And when our chief Shepherd appears
To gather together his own,
He will wipe from our faces all tears,
And bid us encircle his throne.

For he hath prepared a rich crown
Of glory, which fades not away,
For those he will claim as his own,
When he comes on the great bridal day.

To Him let our praises ascend ;
All honour and glory be given
To Jesus, the sinner's best Friend,
Who hath opened the portals of heaven.

By grace he hath sheathed the bright sword
Of Justice, which guarded the way ;
For Jehovah decreed by his Word
The riches of grace to display.

A heart that is broken we bring ;
The banner of love he displays
To Jesus, our Shepherd, our King,
Hosanna ! Hosanna ! All praise !



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